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CHARRON.

A Treatise on Wisdom

BY

PIERRE CHARRON

PARAPHRASED BY

MYRTILLA H. N. DALY

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

MARCUS BENJAMIN

La vraie science et le vrai étude de l'homme, c'est l'homme.
Charron, "De la Sagesse," Lib. 1, Ch. 1, 1601.

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IN MEMORIAM

M. N. D.

PREFATORY NOTE.

THE interest in the works of Pierre Charron, of which this paraphrase is an outcome, was first awakened by the tribute Buckle pays to him in his "History of Civilization." The strong desire to learn more of this priest and philosopher, "who," says Buckle, "rose to an elevation which to Montaigne would have been inaccessible," led to an effort to secure a copy of his "Treatise on Wisdom," and after a long search a quaint and rare translation, made by Samson Lennard early in the seventeenth century, was found in London, upon which the present volume has been based.

Having become a true admirer of this great author, I have tried in this enchiridion to faithfully preserve the expression of his views without the wearisome repetitions of a more leisurely age ; to give the crystallized thought without its massive setting, feeling sure that a convenient form of this, his most celebrated work, is all that is needed to win for him a new recognition. The following extract from the " Memoirs of the Countess de Genlis " is of peculiar interest :

" Some days before his departure, M. de Talleyrand asked me what orders I had for Paris, when I requested him to send me the work called ' La Sagesse de Charron.' Next morning I received a charming note from him, with the book I was desirous of, most elegantly bound, and of an Elzevir edition.

"It happened accidentally that he had this very book, which he kept at the sale of his fine library in London, and took always along with him, as he was very fond of it."

M. H. N. D.

INTRODUCTION.

THIS book requires no apology for its existence, and hence no preface is necessary. The only complete life of its distinguished author is in French, and is not readily accessible; therefore, by way of introduction, a brief sketch of Pierre Charron's career is given in the belief that some interest will be attached to the record of one who has been permitted to remain for so long a time in comparative obscurity.

Pierre Charron was the son of an humble bookseller, and was born in Paris in 1541. Of his childhood we know nothing beyond that his father

is credited with the paternity of twenty-five children, and therefore we assume that his playmates were largely members of his own family. Young Charron must have inherited some literary taste, for he chose a scholastic career, and in lieu of turning his attention to business appears to have studied law in Orleans. He completed his studies in Bourges, where he took the doctor's degree, and settled there in the practice of his profession as a lawyer.

Six years of legal experience convinced him that he had made a mistake, and he then took holy orders. The Bishop of Bazas, Arnaud de Pontac, assigned him certain missions in Gascony and Languedoc, where his success was such that he became lecturer on divinity in Agen, Bordeaux, Cahors, and Condom, and his remarkable eloquence as a preacher resulted in his appointment as

chaplain to Queen Margaret of Valois, the wife of Henri Quatre.

Notwithstanding the reputation that he had acquired as a brilliant orator, and the opportunities now afforded him for advancement, he relinquished his appointment, and in 1588 returned to Paris in order to become a monk in fulfilment of an early vow he had made. Besides, the quiet life in a monastery would give him the time which he desired to devote to philosophical speculations. But his age, being upward of forty-five, proved a barrier to his desires.

Refused for the above reason by the Order of Chartreuse, and then by the Celestins, he returned to preaching, first at Angers, and then at Bordeaux. It was here that he met Montaigne, who at this time held public office, and their acquaintance soon ripened into a deep friendship, which continued until the death

of Montaigne. The latter dying in the arms of Charron, begged him to assume henceforth his family coat-of-arms, and later Charron in his will bequeathed all his property to the brother-in-law of Montaigne.

Charron died suddenly of apoplexy in Paris on the 16th of November, 1603.

We have seen how he changed in his tastes and in his ideas,—first a lawyer, then a theologian, then aspiring to be a monk, and finally devoting himself exclusively to philosophical studies. His works show by their dates of publication a chronological history of the changes in his mental development.

His first work, "Traité des Trois Vérités," was published in 1594. In it he strove to show, notwithstanding the claim of the atheist, that there was a religion; in opposition to the heathen, the Jews, and others, that

of all religions the Christian was the only true one; and demonstrating to the unbeliever that there was nothing but what was good in the Catholic Church.

In the following year he published his "Traité de la Sagesse," a work which was purely philosophical, and showed the influence of his friend Montaigne. In it the spirit of the free-thinker, rather than that of the theologian, is apparent, and so many of its passages contained unorthodox thoughts that Charron became the victim of violent attacks by his contemporaries. Notwithstanding his correction of several chapters, notwithstanding his publication in 1600 of the "Réfutation des Hérétiques" with certain of his sermons on the divinity, the creation, the redemption, and the eucharist; notwithstanding his sudden death, which should have disarmed his enemies,

he and his book were bitterly pursued by the state authorities and the Jesuits. The Jesuit Father Gavasse called Charron *le patriarche des esprits fort*, and insisted that he was an atheist.

After the death of Charron, the authorities in connection with the theological faculty undertook to suppress the "Traité de la Sagesse," but the President—Jeannin—charged by the Chancellor to revise it, made such corrections that a new edition was printed in 1604, with a life of the author. This is the most celebrated of his works, and to it Charron owes his place in the history of modern philosophy.

Buckle refers to it and says in it "we find, for the first time, an attempt made in a modern language to construct a system of morals without the aid of theology." Elsewhere he continues: "Taking his

stand, as it were, on the summit of knowledge, he boldly attempts to enumerate the elements of wisdom, and the conditions under which those elements will work. In the scheme which he thus constructs he entirely omits theological dogmas, and he treats with undissembled scorn many of those conclusions which the people had hitherto universally received. He reminds his countrymen that their religion is the accidental result of their birth and education, and that if they had been born in a Mohammedan country they would have been as firm believers in Mohammedanism as they then were in Christianity. From this consideration, he insists on the absurdity of their troubling themselves about the variety of creeds, seeing that such variety is the result of circumstances over which they have no control. Also it is to be observed that each

of these different religions declares itself to be the true one; and all of them are equally based upon supernatural pretensions, such as mysteries, miracles, prophets, and the like. It is because men forget these things, that they are the slaves of that confidence which is the great obstacle to all real knowledge, and which can only be removed by taking such a large and comprehensive view as will show us how all nations cling with equal zeal to the tenets in which they have been educated. And, says Charron, if we look a little deeper, we shall see that each of the great religions is built upon that which preceded it. Thus the religion of the Jews is founded upon that of the Egyptians; Christianity is the result of Judaism; and, from these two last, there has naturally sprung Mohammedanism. We, therefore, adds this great writer,

should rise above the pretensions of hostile sects; and, without being terrified by the fear of future punishment, or allured by the hope of future happiness, we should be content with such practical religion as consists in performing the duties of life; and, uncontrolled by the dogmas of any particular creed, we should strive to make the soul retire inward upon itself, and by the efforts of its own contemplation admire the ineffable grandeur of the Being of beings, the supreme cause of all created things."

Charron was the first writer in a modern language to point out the doctrine of religious development. Indeed the germ of very many of the advanced thoughts now recognized in our modern theology can be distinctly traced back to his writings. The naturalism which was subsequently advanced by Holbach

and Rousseau is found in the "Traité de la Sagesse."

In the hope that there may be those who desire to know something more of the writings of this author, whose ideas were so far ahead of his time that he was called "an advanced thinker," this collection of his sentiments has been prepared.

MARCUS BENJAMIN.

NEW YORK,
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AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

It is necessary in the beginning of this work to know what wisdom is. At the first view of the simple word some have imagined it to be a quality not common, but exclusive and elevated above that which is ordinary, be it good or evil, for it is used in both senses. We say a wise tyrant and thief as well as a wise king and pilot. Opposed to Wisdom there is not only folly, which is an irregularity of life, but common baseness and plebeian simplicity. Wisdom is strong, well proportioned, a regulation of life, sufficient for whatever is required and necessary.

There are but few wise men, valuable as all rare things are, and it pertains to them by right to command and govern others. There are three kinds of Wisdom, Divine, Human, and Worldly.

Of worldly wisdom we will not speak, except to condemn it. Its great leaders are Opulence, Pleasure, Avarice, Luxury, and Ambition. It is censured by philosophers and theologists, and pronounced folly before God.

Divine wisdom, the highest, is defined and discussed by philosophers and theologists, but differently. The philosophers make it speculative, saying that it is the knowledge of principles and causes, and the highest power to judge of all things, even of God Himself; and this wisdom is metaphysical and dwells wholly in the understanding, as being its chief good and perfection;

it is the first and highest of the intellectual virtues, which may be without either honesty, action, or other moral virtue. The theologists do not make it speculative, but practical, and contend that it is the knowledge of divine things, from which proceeds a judgment and rule of human actions, and they make it twofold: that acquired by study, and like the philosopher's; and that infused and given by God—"coming from above, a gift of the Holy Ghost." The Spirit of God is the Spirit of Wisdom, which is found only in those who are just and free from sin. It is not our purpose to speak of divine wisdom here.

Of human wisdom, of which this book treats, the descriptions are various and insufficient; some think that it is only discretion, and advised conduct in man's affairs and conversation. This is a most ordinary de-

scription, respecting nothing but that which is outward and in action, altogether in the eyes and ears of men, with little regard for the inward motions of the mind, and according to which wisdom may be without essential piety or probity.

Others think it is a rude, unreasonable austerity in opinions, manners, words, and actions, and call those who possess it philosophers, using the word falsely, and meaning visionaries who refuse to be governed by custom.

Now this kind of wisdom, according to our view, is folly, for the wisdom of which we speak is not of the ignorant, but of philosophers and theologists. Both have written of it in their moral essays; the philosophers more fully, because they apply themselves to that which concerns nature and action, teaching pleasingly and graciously that which

is good and profitable. The theologists mount higher, filled with the desire for divine wisdom, and looking principally to the eternal good and salvation of mankind, but teaching with more austerity. The philosophers have also shown excellence not only in their writings but in their honorable and heroic lives. For these reasons in this book I ordinarily follow their advice and sayings, not rejecting those of the theologists, for in substance they agree.

If I had undertaken to instruct the cloister I must necessarily have followed the advice of the theologists; but our book is intended for daily life, and to form a man for the world, and instruct him in human wisdom which is of law and reason; a noble composition of the entire man, his thoughts, words, and actions. That work is well done which is complete and perfect in all its

parts, and that man is accounted wise who best knows how to keep himself from vice, errors, and passion; who considers and judges all things without prejudice, and rules himself according to reason, law, and the light inspired by God, which shines in us. He who is without knowledge of himself and subjects his mind to any kind of servitude is not wise.

If wisdom could be seen with our bodily eyes there would be stirred within us a strong desire to possess it.

The two principal means to attain wisdom are the natural and the acquired. He who is fortunate in the first, being favorably formed by nature, has the advantage. But he who is not so gifted must study to supply that which is wanting. Socrates said of himself, that by the study of philosophy he had corrected and reformed his natural defects.

We must examine and respect the ancient writers, though without enslaving ourselves; for it is an unjust tyranny, and folly, to enthrall our minds to believe and follow all our predecessors have said; and none but fools thus suffer themselves to be led by the nose; and if a man would follow them, how shall he? For they do not agree among themselves. Aristotle, who seems to be the most self-satisfied of the philosophers, dared to challenge and censure all who went before him, yet he has uttered more gross absurdities than any of them; witness his "Treatise on the Soul of Man."

It is no cause for wonder that all men are not of one opinion, there is nothing more befitting nature and the spirit of man than that they should differ.

That wise divine, St. Paul, gives us this liberty, in that he willeth

"every man should abound in his own understanding," not judging or condemning those who think otherwise.

PIERRE CHARRON.

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A TREATISE ON WISDOM.

WISDOM.

THE most excellent and divine counsel, the best and most profitable of all advice, but that least followed, is to study and learn how to know ourselves. This is the foundation of wisdom and the highway to whatever is good; and there is no folly compared to this, to be anxious to know all things rather than ourselves. For the true science and true study of man, is man.

By the knowledge of himself man arrives sooner and better at the knowledge of God than by any other means, because he finds in himself better help, more marks of the divine nature than he can know in any other way, and he can better understand

and know that which is in himself than in another.

Over the porch of the temple of Apollo, the god of knowledge and light, was engraven in letters of gold this sentence: "Know thyself," as a salutation and admonition to all, signifying that he who would have access to that divinity, and entrance into the temple, must first know himself, and could not otherwise be admitted.

With the knowledge of self, we would provide far better for ourselves and our affairs, and fit ourselves to be other than we are. He that knows not his own infirmities takes no care to amend them; he that is ignorant of his own wants takes little care to provide for them; he that feels not his own vices and miseries seeks for no remedy.

Socrates was accounted the wisest man of his age, not because his

knowledge was greater than others, but because his knowledge of himself was better; for being a man as others were, weak and miserable, he knew it, and ingenuously acknowledged his condition, and lived and governed himself accordingly.

The knowledge of ourselves is not obtained from another, or by comparison, rule, or example, but is acquired only by a true and daily study, a serious and attentive examination, not only of our words and actions, but of our most secret thoughts.

THE FIRST CONSIDERATION OF MAN.

We will consider God's supernatural creation, according to the description which Moses gives of the creation of the world, the boldest and richest piece of work ever brought to light. I mean the first nine chapters of Genesis: Man was made by God,

not only after all other creatures, as the most perfect, but master and superintendent of all; "that he might rule over the fish of the sea, the fowls of the air, and the beasts of the earth." On the same day wherein the four-footed beasts were created, including those two which most resemble man,—the swine inwardly and the ape outwardly,—after all was ended, as the closing seal and sign of His work, and in a word, as the accomplishment and perfection of the work, the honor and miracle of nature, God made man with deliberation, counsel, and preparation. He said: "Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness." He then rested; and this rest was also made for man. "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for it." Afterward He made Himself man, which He did for His love of him. "For us and for our salvation,"

whereby we see that in all things God has aimed at man, finally in him and by him to bring all things unto Himself, the beginning and end of all.

Man's body was first formed of virgin earth, afterwards the soul was by divine inspiration infused; and so the body and the soul made a living creature. "He breathed into his face the breath of life." Man was created upright, only a small part touching the earth; the head directly tending towards heaven whereon he gazes, contrary to the plant, which has its head and root in the ground. So that man is a divine plant, and grows up unto heaven. The beast is in the middle, between man and the plant. There are three parts in man. The spirit (or mind), which is in the brain, and which is the fountain of the sensitive soul; the soul, and the flesh. The spirit and the flesh are

the two extremes, heaven and earth; the soul, the middle region.

There are in the soul two very different parts. One pure, intellectual, and divine, wherein the base has no part; the other, base, sensitive, and brutish, a mean between the intellectual part and the body.

The spirit is the highest, and most heroic, a spark, and image of the Divinity, breathing nothing but good and heaven, to which it tends. The flesh is as the dregs of the earth, tending always to material things.

The soul is continually disturbed by the spirit and the flesh, and, according to whichever it yields, is either spiritual and good, or carnal and evil. Here are lodged all those natural affections which are neither virtuous nor vicious, as the love of our parents and friends, fear of shame, compassion toward the afflicted, desire for good reputation.

The attributes of the body are health, beauty, cheerfulness, strength, and vigor. There is nothing to be preferred above bodily health, except honesty, which is the health of the soul.

Next follows beauty, which is a powerful quality, nothing surpassing it; there are none so barbarous, none so resolute as not to be influenced by it. It clouds the judgment, makes deep impressions, and men yield to its authority. Socrates called it "a short tyranny"; Plato, "the privilege of nature."

"He who is gently born may well rejoice,
To have by nature what he would by choice."

There is nothing more beautiful in man than his soul; and in the body of man than his visage, wherein is an image of the soul, like an escutcheon with many quarters representing the collection of all his titles to

honor, placed at the entrance of his palace.

The countenance is the throne of beauty and love, also of all inward emotions; like the hand of a dial which notes the hours and moments of time, the wheels and movements being hidden within. He who shows in his countenance the favors of nature imprinted in rare and exquisite beauty, has a lawful power over us, and we, turning our eyes toward him, he likewise turns our affections and enthralls them despite ourselves. The beauty of the body, especially the visage, should in all reason demonstrate and prove the beauty of the soul.

THE SOUL.

It is difficult to define or say truly what the soul is, as with other forms; because they are things relative, which subsist not of themselves, but are parts of a whole. It has been

discussed by the wisest of all nations, but with great diversity of opinion, varying according to country, religion, and profession, without any certain determination. Aristotle confuted twelve definitions that were before him, and could hardly sustain his own.

It is easy to say what it is not: That it is not fire, air, water; nor has it the qualities of these elements. Neither has it the action, life, or energy of a living body, for to live, to see, to understand, is but the effect or action of the soul and not the soul itself. We may simply say it is an essential quickening power, which gives to the plant a vegetal life; to a beast a sensible life, which comprehends the vegetal; to a man an intellectual life, which includes the other two.

I call it the intellective soul rather than the reasonable; for in some

measure, according to the greatest philosophers, and experience itself, the reasonable is likewise found in beasts; but not the intellective, that being higher. Not "like horse and mule in whom there is no understanding."

The soul is not the beginning or source. That properly belongs to the sovereign first Author; but an inward cause of life, motion, sense, and understanding; it moves the body, but God moves the soul.

Concerning the nature and essence of the human soul (for the soul of a beast is without doubt material, bred and born with the matter, and with it corruptible) there is a question of great importance. Is it corporeal or incorporeal? It is corporeal according to the philosophers and our greatest theologists, and their decision is that whatever is created, being compared to God, is gross

and material, and He only is incorporeal.

Whatever is included in this finite world is finite; limited both in virtue and substance, enclosed and circumscribed, which is the true condition of the body. God only is infinite.

We must consider in spiritual creatures three things, essence, faculty, and operation. By the latter, which is the action, we know the faculty, and by it, the essence. The action may be hindered, and wholly cease without any prejudice to the soul and its faculties; as the skill and knowledge of painting remain in the painter, although his hands are bound; but if the faculties perish the soul must needs be gone, as fire is no longer fire having lost the power of warming.

Another important question offers itself: Whether there is in creatures, especially in man, one soul or

more? Upon this point there are various opinions, but these may be reduced to three. Some of the Greeks, and almost all the Arabians, imitating them, have thought that there was in every man one immortal soul. Many Egyptians held quite a contrary opinion, and believed in a plurality of souls in every creature, each different and distinct: two in beasts, three in man—two mortal, the vegetal and sensible; the third intellective, immortal. The third opinion, and most accepted by all nations, is that there is in every creature but one soul. The plurality of souls on one side seems strange and absurd, for that is giving many forms to one and the same thing. On the other side, it gives credit and help to our belief in the immortality of the intellectual soul, for there being three souls there can follow no injury if two of them die and the

third continue immortal. The unity of the soul seems to oppose its immortality, for how can one and the same indivisible thing be part mortal and part immortal? It would seem of necessity that the soul must be altogether mortal or immortal, but that is absurd: the first abolishes all religion and sound philosophy, the second makes beasts likewise immortal. Nevertheless, it seems more credible that there is in every creature but one soul, for the diversity of faculties and actions neither lessen nor heighten this unity, any more than the unity of a spring is affected by its various rivers, or the unity of the sun dissipated by its various effects, to heat, to lighten, to melt, to dry, to whiten, to blacken. Neither does this essential unity of the soul hinder in any way the immortality of the human soul in its essence, for though the vegetal and sensitive faculties,

which are but accidents, die—that is, cannot be exercised without the body, the intellectual soul is always well, because there is no need of a body.

The immortality of the soul (the foundation of all religion) is generally acknowledged throughout the world by outward profession, though inwardly this is not always so.

It is profitable to believe, and has been proved by many natural reasons; but better established by the authority of religion than in any other way. There is in man an inclination and disposition to believe it; he is disposed by nature to desire it; the justice of God confirms it.

As to what becomes of the soul, and its condition after the natural separation by death there are many opinions, but that question does not belong to the subject of this book. The

metempsychosis or transmigration theory of Pythagoras has been accepted in some degree by the Academicians, Stoics, Egyptians, and others, though not by all in the same sense, some admitting it only as a punishment for the wicked, as in the case of Nebuchadnezzar, who was changed into a beast by the judgment of God. Others have thought that the good souls became angels, wicked ones devils. Also some have affirmed that the souls of the wicked after a certain time are reduced to nothing. But the truth of all this we must learn from religion, and the theologists who speak of it more clearly.

The senses are the sentinels of the soul watching for its preservation, and messengers or scouts, to serve as ministers and instruments to the understanding, the sovereign part of the soul.

THE SENSES.

It is said all knowledge begins in us by the senses, but this is not altogether true. They are our first masters. One does not depend upon another, each being equally great in its own domain, though the domain of one far exceeds that of another.

Of the five senses given to man, these are the most precious and beautiful jewels: sight, hearing, and speech.

Sight in composition is most wonderful and of shining beauty. It excels all the other senses in apprehending more quickly, extending farther, even to the heavens and fixed stars; it is more divine, and possesses liberty incomparable, ability to signify our thoughts, to please or displease; it serves for a tongue and a hand; it speaks and it strikes. The privation of sight is darkness, which naturally brings fear, because

one is robbed of so excellent a guide.

Hearing is a spiritual sense, an agent of the understanding, capable of bringing divine things to the soul which the sight cannot. Science, truth, and virtue have entrance into the soul by the ear, the porter of the Spirit. Christianity teaches faith and salvation come by hearing; and that faith is the belief in those things that are not seen.

Speech is peculiarly given to man, a precious gift, and very necessary. It is the interpreter of the soul, the messenger of the heart, the gate by which that which is within issues forth, and the spirit itself is made visible. As vessels are known whether they are broken or whole, full or empty, by the sound, so is man by his speech. The tongue is a powerful master, an imperious commander. This is a great point

in wisdom : he who rules his tongue well is wise, because in it are both good and evil. Speech should be sober and seldom. To know how to be silent is a great advantage in speaking well ; and he who does not know how to do one well, does not know the other.

They who abound in words are barren in good speech and good actions ; like those trees which are full of leaves and yield little fruit. The wise man has his tongue in his heart, the fool his heart in his tongue.

A man must not be too anxious to relate what happens in the market-place, nor enter into a long account of his own actions and fortunes, for others do not take the same pleasure in hearing as in relating. Above all, never be offensive, for speech is the forerunner and instrument of charity, and to abuse it, is contrary to the

purpose of nature. All kind of foolish speech is unworthy a man of wisdom and honor.

Temperance in speech belongs also to secrecy. Be faithful not only in that which is committed and given to you to keep, but in that which wisdom and discretion tell you to suppress. The tongue of a wise man is the door of a royal cabinet, which is no sooner opened than a thousand treasures present themselves.

Two things indicate an obscure understanding: to be silent when we ought to converse, and to speak when we ought to be silent. You can close the mouth of a bull, but you cannot shut the mouth of a fool.

A silent woman is a rare thing, and seldom found, therefore she is said to be a precious gift from God.

THE SPIRIT.

The spirit or mind is the intellectual part of the soul, consisting of many parts, faculties, and actions, having many doubts and difficulties. Its first office is simply to receive and apprehend the images which present themselves. This is imagination and apprehension. The power to digest the things received by the imagination is reason.

The exercise of this power which is to arrange and divide the things received, and also to add others, is reasoning. The subtle faculty to do this, and to penetrate the things considered, is called spirit.

The reviewing them all, trying them by the whetstone of reason to frame a firm decision, is judgment.

The effect in the end of this understanding is knowledge and intelligence.

The action that follows this knowledge, which is to extend itself and advance the thing known, is will.

So all these attributes, imagination, reason, judgment, understanding, knowledge, will, are one and the same essence, but all are different in force, virtue, and action.

No one can set forth the greatness or capacity of the mind of man. Let it be called an image of the living God, a celestial ray, to which God has given reason for a guide. There is nothing wherein the mind plays not a part, with vain and trivial subjects as well as high and weighty ones. The action of the mind is always to search without intermission. The pursuits of the spirit of man are without limit. The world is a school of inquiry.

We are born to search for truth, but to possess it belongs to a higher power. Truth is not his who thrusts

himself into it, but his who strives to reach it.

Truth and error are received into the soul in the same way; the mind has no way to distinguish truth from a lie but by reason and experience.

The spirit of man is rash and dangerous, especially one that is quick and vigorous; for, being so free, it easily shakes off common opinions, and those rules whereby it should be restrained, as unjust tyranny. It undertakes to examine all things, to judge that which is received plausibly by the world to be ridiculous and absurd; and finding an appearance of reason will defend itself against all. There are very few in whose guidance and conduct a man may trust, and upon whose judgment he can rely. The finest wits are not the wisest men.

Wisdom and folly are near neighbors, with but a step between.

Aristotle said: "There is no great spirit without some mixture of folly." Seneca said: "The mind of man is naturally stubborn, always inclined to difficult and contrary things, and is easier led than driven; like generous horses that are better governed with an easy bridle than a cutting bit."

The will is made to follow the understanding, which is a guide and lamp to it, but being corrupted by the passions, perhaps corrupts the understanding, and hence come the greater part of erroneous judgments. Envy, hatred, malice, love, and fear make us judge and look at things other than they are, from whence comes the saying, "Judge without passion."

So it is that the generous actions of men are often obscured by base misconstructions, which proceed either from envy, a malignant na-

ture, unsound judgment, or that the sight is so clouded that the clear splendor of virtue cannot be discerned in its native purity.

The will is a part of the reasonable soul, and of great importance, and it is necessary above all things to know how to rule it. By the will the soul goes forth and dwells in the things beloved, into which it transforms itself, bearing the title and livery of vice or virtue, whichever it follows, ennobled by loving those things that are high and worthy to be loved, or vilified by giving itself to that which is base and unworthy.

The will is sharpened by opposition and dulled by satiety, pursuing that which it has not.

THE PASSIONS.

Passion is a violent emotion of the soul in the sensitive part, which is made either to follow that which

the soul thinks to be good for it or to avoid that which it takes to be evil. Every passion is moved by the appearance and opinion, either of what is good or evil. Those passions which have the most appearance of good are love, desire, hope, despair, joy; of evil, are anger, hatred, envy, jealousy, revenge, cruelty, and fear.

LOVE.

The first and chief mistress of all the passions is love, which consists of various degrees, as friendship, charity, and esteem.

AMBITION.

Ambition (which is a thirst for honor and glory) is a sweet and pleasing passion, but not unalloyed. An ambitious man never looks backward but forward, and it is greater grief to suffer one to go

before him than pleasure to let a thousand be behind him. Ambition is twofold—one for glory and honor, the other for greatness and command. An ambitious nature is never satisfied, soaring higher and higher to enrich itself, not at a slow pace, but with a loose bridle running headlong to greatness and glory. Tacitus said, the last vice which even the wise abandon, is desire for glory.

Ambition is the strongest and most powerful passion. It vanquishes even love, and robs it of health and tranquillity (for glory and tranquillity cannot lodge together).

It tramples under foot reverence and respect for religion. Take for example Mahomet, who tolerated all religions, that he might reign; and those arch heretics who would rather be leaders in lies than disciples of truth.

There is nothing that resists the force of ambition, and it has no limit, but is a gulf without brink or bottom,—a fire which increases by the nourishment given it; it sometimes hides other vices, but does not take them away. Serpents retain their venom though frozen, and an ambitious man his vices, though he covers them with cold dissimulation.

Ambition is not altogether to be condemned, for the noblest desires and actions arise from it; and although honorable achievements and glorious exploits have not been true works of virtue but of ambition in their authors, nevertheless the effects have been beneficial. That one should be virtuous and do good for glory as if that were the recompense, is a false and vain opinion. Much were the state of virtue to be pitied if she should receive her commendations and rewads from another.

A man must settle his soul, and control his actions, that the brightness of honor dazzle not his reason; and must strengthen his mind with brave resolutions, which serve him as barriers against the assaults of ambition. The greater the virtue the less glory does it seek. Never forget that man comes into the world as to a comedy where he has no choice in the part he has to play, but can only think how to play the part well that is given him.

Let us accept modestly whatever is committed to us, use it sincerely, giving an account to God, who has placed us here to stand sentinel to the end that others may rest in safety under our care.

Let us seek no other recompense than a good conscience as witness to our well-doing.

Let us hold it for a maxim, that the fruit of our honorable actions is

to have acted them. Virtue cannot find outside itself a reward worthy itself.

COVETOUSNESS.

Covetousness is the vile and base passion of fools, who account riches the highest good and poverty the greatest evil, weighing what is good by the goldsmith's balance, when nature has taught us to measure it by the ell of necessity.

What greater folly can there be than to adore that which nature itself has put under our feet and hidden in the bowels of the earth as unworthy to be seen. "Riches serve a wise man but command a fool." What can be more base than for a man to disgrace himself and become a slave to that which should be subject to him. "Poverty wants many things but covetousness all."

The counter passion to covetousness, too, is vicious, which is—to

hate riches or to waste them prodigally; this is to refuse the means to do well and to escape the labor of a noble use of them.

If riches come to you do not reject them, but cheerfully accept them; receive them into your house, but not into your heart, into your possession, but not into your love. Employ them honestly and discreetly for the good of others. If they happen to be lost or stolen, be not sorrowful, and let them go by themselves.

He deserves not to be accepted of God, and is unworthy His love, who makes account of the riches of this world.

POVERTY AND RICHES.

The two elements and sources of discord in the world are poverty and riches, for the excessive wealth of some stirs them to pride, a love of

luxury and pleasure, and disdain of the poor, and the extreme poverty of others provokes them to jealousy and despair.

Which of the two, poverty or riches, is more dangerous has not been determined. According to Aristotle, it is abundance; for a state need not doubt those who desire only to live, but those who are ambitious and rich. According to Plato it is poverty, for desperate poor men are terrible and furious creatures, and they dare, because their number is great.

Law-makers and statesmen have gone about to take away these two extremes, to make all things common, and to establish equality which they call the mother of peace and amity, something which can never exist, except in the imagination. There is no hatred stronger than between equals — the jealousy of

equals is the school of trouble. Inequality is good, if it be moderate. Harmony does not consist in like sounds, but in true accord.

Good and ill—prosperity and adversity—is the twofold fortune in which we enter the list, the two schools of the spirit of man.

Wisdom teaches us to hold ourselves upright, to keep always the same countenance, and whatever falls into our hands to make it a subject for doing good.

Honors, riches, and the favors of fortune are wrongfully called goods, and he who names them so and places in them the good of man fastens his happiness to a rotten cable and anchors it in quicksands. For what is more uncertain than such possessions which come and go, pass and run on like a river? Like a river they make a noise at their coming in, their entrance is full of

vexation; and when they are dried up there remains nothing in the bottom but mud. Prosperity is like a honeyed poison, sweet and pleasant, but dangerous. When fortune laughs, and everything is according to our heart's desire, then should we fear most, stand upon our guard, bridle our affections, control our actions by reason, and above all avoid presumption. Prosperity is a slippery pass whereon a man must take sure footing. There is no time when men so much forget God as in prosperity; it is a rare thing to find men who willingly attribute to Him their success.

There are some who swim in shallow waters, elated with the least favors of fortune, forgetting themselves, and becoming insupportable, which is a true picture of folly.

A wise man knows how to command in prosperity, and conduct

himself in adversity, which is the more difficult.

Wisdom furnishes us with arms and discipline for both combats, with a spur for adversity to incite our courage, and a bridle for prosperity to keep ourselves within bounds of modesty; the first is fortitude, the last temperance, the two moral virtues against the two fortunes which that great philosopher, Epictetus, well expressed in two words containing all moral philosophy—"Sustain and abstain."

In whatever afflicts us let us consider two things, the nature of that which has happened to us, and that which is in ourselves. We must likewise cast our eyes upon those that are in a worse condition than ourselves, who would think themselves happy were they in our place.

He who takes heed, and considers the adversity of another as some-

thing that may happen to himself, is sufficiently armed. It is an old saying, that he who is suddenly surprised is half beaten, and he who is warned, is as two against one. They are unwise who say, "I had not thought of it."

How much we are deceived and how little judgment we have, when we think that that which has happened to others cannot likewise affect us.

There are not as many waves in the sea as desires in the heart of man; it is a bottomless deep.

Our desires gather strength through hope, which often blinds our understanding, holds our thoughts hanging in the clouds, making us dream, waking.

Despair, when once lodged in our hearts, torments our souls, and for the love of that which we think never to obtain we lose even whatever we possess.

Anger is a foolish passion, and puts us wholly out of ourselves, and, in seeking the means to withstand the evil which threatens, or that has already affected us, it makes our blood boil in our hearts, and raises a furious vapor in our spirits which blinds us, and casts us headlong into whatever may satisfy the desire we have for revenge.

A man deceives himself in thinking there is courage in violence. Anger shows itself to be more savage than a beast, when neither by defence, nor excuse, nor by silence and patience can it be pacified. This passion feeds upon itself with a persuasion that it has reason, that it is just, and that others are to blame, but the injustice of another cannot make it just, nor the loss we suffer from another make it profitable to us; it would cure an evil by an evil, and to yield the correction

of an offence to anger is to correct vice by itself. Pythagoras was wont to say that the end of anger was the beginning of repentance.

The most glorious conquest is for a man to conquer himself, not to be moved by another. To be stirred to anger is to confess the accusation.

He can never be great, who yields himself to the offence of another. If we vanquish not our anger it will conquer us. Reason when blinded by passion serves us no more than the pinioned wing of a bird. How much grace and sweetness there is in clemency, how pleasing and acceptable to others, and gratifying to ourselves; it draws unto us the hearts and wills of men. In consideration of that esteem and love which we bear wisdom, we must command ourselves, remain constant and invincible, lift our thoughts from earth to that height which is

never overshadowed with clouds, nor troubled with thunders, but in perpetual serenity.

Hatred, which strangely and without reason troubles us, puts it in the power of those we hate to afflict and vex us. If there is anything to be hated in this world it is hate itself.

Envy is cousin-german to hatred; a miserable passion which in torment exceeds hell itself. It is the desire for that good which another possesses; it gnaws our heart, and turns the good of another to our own hurt. Whilst an envious man looks upon the possessions of another, he loses what is good in himself and takes no delight in it.

Do thou rather pity others than envy them; if it should be a true good that has happened to another, we should rejoice at it. To be pleased with another's prosperity is to increase our own.

Jealousy is a weak malady of the soul, vain, terrible, and tyrannical. It is the gall which corrupts the honey of life; it changes love into hate and respect into disdain. The means to avoid it is for a man to make himself worthy of that which he desires, for jealousy is a distrust of one's self. The Emperor Aurelius, of whom Faustina, his wife, asked what he would do if his enemy Cassius should obtain the victory against him in battle, answered, "I serve not the gods so slenderly that they will send me so hard a fortune." So they who have any part in the affection of another and fear losing it, should say, I honor not so little his love that he will deprive me of it. The confidence we have in our own merit is a great gauge of the regard of another.

Cruelty is a detestable vice and against nature; it is called inhu-

manity; it proceeds from weakness, an offspring of cowardice, for a valorous man always exercises his strength against a resisting enemy, whom he no sooner has at his mercy than he is satisfied.

It arises from the inward malignity of the soul which feeds and delights itself with the hurt of another.

Compassion is that virtue so much commended in religion, found in the holiest and wisest of mankind. It is to mourn with those who are afflicted, and with a fellow-feeling pity their miseries. Wisdom teaches us to succor the afflicted, without afflicting ourselves. God commands us to aid and have a care for the poor and to defend their cause.

Sadness is a languishing of the spirit, it is a dangerous enemy to our rest, it takes from us reason, it corrupts the whole man, puts his virtues to sleep when he most needs

them to withstand that evil which oppresses him. Philosophy teaches us to confront and disdain all evils, though they be great and grievous; accounting them not evils, or at least small and light, and unworthy the slightest disturbance of our minds. To be sorry or complain is ill befitting a man; so taught the Stoics, Peripatetics, and Platonists. This manner of preserving a man from sorrow and melancholy is as rare as it is excellent, and belongs to spirits of the highest rank.

Fear is the apprehension of evil to come, which holds us in continued anxiety; not that fear of God so much commended in the Scriptures, nor that fear which proceeds from love, and is a sweet respect toward the thing beloved; but that vicious fear which troubles and afflicts. It is a deceitful passion, and has no other power over us but to mock and

allure; and in a doubtful darkness holds and torments us with masks and shows of evils, that have naught in themselves whereby to hurt us, save in appearance. Fear, doubtless, is of all evils the greatest and most vexatious, for other evils are but evils while they last; but fear is of that which is, and that which is not, and perhaps never shall be, and sometimes of that which cannot possibly be. This then is a passion truly malignant and tyrannical, which draws from an imaginary evil true and bitter sorrows.

That mind is in a lamentable state which is troubled about future things, robbed of its understanding, and losing the peaceable comfort of present good

Let no man anticipate evils. Our fears are as likely to deceive us as our hopes, and it may be those things which we dread most may bring the greatest comfort.

The turn of a wheel raises him who is of low degree to the highest post of honor; and many times it happens that we are preserved by that which we thought would have been our overthrow.

THE ESTIMATION OF LIFE.

It is an important point of wisdom to know the value of life, how to preserve and direct it; and there is nothing, perhaps, wherein a man so entirely fails. Some consider life a sovereign good, and desire to prolong it upon any condition, thinking it can never be bought too dearly. He who lives only for the pleasure of life lives not; it is no marvel if he fail and his life be wholly compounded of errors; but life to those who are good and wise may be profitable both to themselves and others. It is a token of wisdom and industry to pass our lives in quietness, making

a virtue of necessity. There is a time to live, and there is a time to die, and a good death is better than an ill life.

A wise man lives no longer, than that his life may be worth more than his death; for the longest life is not always the best. How many men have survived their glory, and by a desire to lengthen their life but a little, have darkened it again and lived to help bury their own honor? To what end does a long life serve? Simply to live, to breathe, eat, drink, and see; this needs not a long time; who will not be wearied doing the same thing always? It is to begin where we end, and to re-spin the same web. Perhaps some will say they desire a long life to learn and profit the more, and to proceed to greater perfection of knowledge and virtue. We employ but badly that little which is given to us, not only

in vanity and those things which yield us no profit, but in malice and sin, and then cry out and complain that we have not enough given to us.

We have life enough, but we do not manage it well.

Seneca said: "A great part of life is lost to those who do ill, a greater, to those who do nothing, and all to those who do that which they should not." There are three sides to every life, three degrees, as it were: one private and in the closet of the heart, another in the house and family, the third in public or in the eyes of the world. It is more difficult to order and rule the first than the other two; the reason is, because where there is neither judge nor controller, no thought either of punishment or recompense, when conscience and reason are our only guides, we carry ourselves more carelessly than in public, where we are held in check by

fear of reproach, and the judgment of others. There are many who in public are accounted great and holy, who in their private lives have nothing to commend them. That which is done in public is fiction, the truth is secret. "The whole world plays the comedian."

Public actions thunder in the ears of men, and it is of this a man thinks when engaged in them.

Men are more scrupulous in outward actions that are but of small importance, than in inward and secret actions, that are requisite and necessary, and therefore more difficult.

They who commend so much the retired life, as a safe retreat from the molestations and troubles of the world, and a means of preserving themselves pure and free from vice, seem to have reason on their side, for in the company of the wicked there is danger. But they who

think that a solitary life is the more perfect, more fit for the exercise of virtue, grossly deceive themselves, for it is an ease of life, an indifferent possession—it is not to enter into business, troubles, and difficulties, but to flee from them ; and it is easier to part with goods, honors, and responsibilities than to govern them well. To think solitude a sanctuary and an assured haven against all vice and temptations is not true in all respects. To flee is not to escape, sometimes it increases the danger. A man must indeed be wise and strong and well assured of himself, when he falls into his own hands; there is an excellent Spanish proverb which says, "God keep me from myself." It is beyond all doubt far more noble and difficult to discharge the duties of a king, a prelate, or pastor, than those of a monk or hermit.

COMPARISONS OF LIFE.

The comparisons between country and city life to him who loves wisdom are not hard to make. In the fields the spirit is more free and to itself. In cities, both our affairs and those of others — the contentions, visits, and entertainments, how much time do they steal from us? "Friends steal away time." Cities are prisons to men's spirits, as cages are to birds. The celestial fire that is in us will not be shut up, it loves the air and the fields. It has been said that country life is the cousin of wisdom, which cannot be without beautiful free thoughts and meditation, not found amidst the troubles and confusion of the city. The country life is pure, innocent, and simple. As for pleasure and health the whole heavens lie open before us, the earth discloses its beauty, its fruits are be-

fore our eyes; while those who live in cities are banished from this world.

Some have thought that life led in common, wherein nothing belongs to any man whereby he may say, "this is mine," or "that is thine," tends most to perfection, and has most charity and concord. This may take place in the company of a certain number of people led and directed by certain rules, but not in a state and commonwealth. Plato having once approved it, thinking thereby to take away all avarice and dissensions, quickly changed his opinion; for, as the practice shows, not only is there no hearty affection toward that which is common to all, but in such communities are murmurings, contentions, and hatreds, and as the proverb says, "The common ass is always ill saddled."

SOME OF MAN'S NATURAL QUALITIES.

As man is composed of two parts, the soul and body, it is a difficult matter to describe him in his perfection. With regard to his spirit he is extolled above all other creatures, but let us consider him according to his life, referring to these five points, vanity, weakness, inconstancy, misery, and presumption, which are his natural qualities. Vanity is essentially a quality of the human mind, and there is nothing more foolish. Pindar called it the "shadow of a dream." Vanity is shown and expressed in many ways; first in our thoughts and imaginations which are often more than vain, frivolous, and ridiculous, taking our time without our perceiving it. So natural and powerful is vanity that it robs and plucks out of our hands solid and substantial things and leaves

us nothing, — building castles in Spain.

What vanity and loss of time there are in salutations, entertainments, and ceremonies. How many hyperbolic speeches, hypocrisies, and impostures there are in the sight and knowledge of all; how much inconvenience does a man suffer from these courtly vanities; and in familiar conversation how much that is unprofitable, false, boastful and vain, not to say wicked and pernicious, does he endure. A vain man desires and delights to speak of himself and that which is his, and, if he thinks he has said or done anything worthy of honor he is not at ease until he has told of it and made it known to others. The crown and perfection of the vanity of man is shown in that which he most seeks after. He pleases himself and places his whole happiness in those vain

and frivolous goods without which he could live comfortably, not caring for the true and essential; his whole good, nothing but opinions and dreams; he runs, he hunts up and down, he catches a shadow, he flies, he dies, and a mote at last is the reward of his life's work.

Let us note some effects and testimonies of human weakness. It is imbecility to be unwilling to give or receive a reproof, and to be unable to give a denial with reason, or to suffer a repulse with patience. Another form of imbecility is when a man subjects himself to a certain particular mode of life; this is effeminate and unworthy an honest man; it makes him different in conversation and may be hurtful too, when a change of manners and bearing is necessary. In false accusations and suspicion there is a twofold weakness: one in justifying and excusing one's self too carefully;

the other when the accused is so courageous that he takes no care to excuse or justify himself, because he scorns the accusation and accuser as unworthy an answer, and will not do himself the wrong to defend himself. The fairest form of living is to be pliable to all, even to excess itself if need be; to be able to dare, to know how to do all things, and yet do nothing but what is good. It is good to know all, but not to use all. Another testimony of weakness is running after scholastic examples; never to settle an opinion without proof in print; not to believe men but such as are in books, nor truth itself, except it is of the ancients. For this reason foolish things if they once pass the press have credit and dignity. Now every day many things are done before our eyes which, if we had the ability and inclination to collect and apply to the

times, we should find to be miracles, and marvellous examples quite equal to those of the past, which we admire so much, because they are old, and in print.

But after all this, what better discloses human weakness than religion? Its very intention is to make man feel his own infirmity, his nothingness; and to make him receive from God his good, his strength, his all. The weakness of man being so great, that to give him some access, and communion with the Divinity, and to unite him to God, it was necessary that God should humble Himself to the lowest: "God, because in His height He could not be apprehended by us little ones, did humble Himself to men." Those sacrifices, not only of beasts but of human beings, that in former times were made throughout the world, and in some countries are still made, and those people who

believe that the principal service and most powerful means to appease God is to impose upon themselves some painful and difficult task, show signs of human infirmity and misery. It is true that God in the first ages and infancy of the world and nature did accept from the hands of religious men such devotion, taking in good part that which was done with the intent to honor and serve Him. But uniting the world by the sacrifice of His Son, He abolished them, and said "I will have mercy and not sacrifice."

INCONSTANCY.

Man is, of all creatures, the most difficult to sound and know. He is dual and artificial, and there are in him so many cabinets and dark corners from which he comes forth, sometimes a man, sometimes a satyr; in his actions is a perpetual race of

errors; sometimes a god, sometimes a fly; he laughs and weeps for one and the same thing (as the extremity of laughter is mingled with tears); content and discontent; he will and he will not, and in the end knows not what he will; now he is filled with such joy and gladness that he cannot stay within his own skin, and presently he falls out with himself and dares not trust himself.

For the most part men's actions are nothing but impulses, induced by occasions and that have reference to others. Irresolution, inconstancy, and instability are the most common, and apparent vices in the nature of man. We follow our inclinations, and as the wind of occasion carries us, not governed by reason.

Constancy, which is a stayed resolution, is always maintained by the wise, in whom the will is governed and subject to the rule of reason,

and not by fleeting, inconstant opinions which are commonly false.

MISERY.

"Man born of a woman hath but a short time to live, and is full of misery"; sorrow is the only true evil man is wholly born to, and it is his natural property. The Mexicans thus salute their new-born infants, "Infant, thou art come into the world to suffer. Endure, suffer, and hold thy peace." The empire of sorrow is far greater than that of pleasure. Evil comes of itself without seeking; pleasure must be sought after, and many times we pay more for it than it is worth. Pleasure is not always unalloyed, and there is always something wanting; grief is often entire and absolute, and the greatest pleasures touch us not so nearly as the lightest sorrows. We are not so conscious of our sound

health as of the least malady. It is not enough that man is by nature miserable, and that besides substantial evils he forges false ones; but he causes both the true and false to endure longer than necessary by the remembrance of what is past, and in the anticipation of that which is to come. The fearful, and sometimes false apprehension of evils which may come, afflict and darken, as with smoke, all the beauty and serenity of the soul. Let us leave this anticipation of evil, for there is misery in every painful thought, and we have no power over that which is to come, and much less over what is past.

The world has three sorts of people in it who take up much room and carry great sway, both in number and reputation: the superstitious, the formalists, and the pedants, and notwithstanding they differ in opinions they are all of one stamp; they

are dangerous people and afflicted with an incurable disease. It is lost labor to try to persuade them to change their minds, for they account themselves the best and wisest in the world. Opinionative obstinacy is there in its proper seat, and for him who is stricken with these evils there is little hope of recovery.

The superstitious are enemies of true religion; they cover themselves with the cloak of piety, zeal, and love toward God, tormenting and punishing themselves more than is needful, thinking thereby to merit much, and that God is not only pleased but indebted to them.

The formalists do nothing against the tenor of the law, and fashion their lives to outward forms, thinking to be free from blame in following their desires, by omitting no outward observance. The rule of duty extends beyond the rule of

law. How many good works have been omitted, how many evils committed under the cloak of forms. And therefore it is very truly said that the extremity of the law is the extremity of wrong.

The pedants, with great study and pains filch from other men's writings their learning, and set it out to view with ostentation. Are there any people in the world so foolish in their affairs, more unskilful in everything, and yet so presumptuous and obstinate? They have their memories stuffed with the wisdom of other men, and have none of their own; and it seems their learning serves for no other purpose than to make them arrogant prattlers.

PRESUMPTION.

Pride and presumption are the greatest defects of the spirit. Presumption makes a man content only

with himself; he will not give place to another, he disdains counsel, and rests in his own opinions; he takes upon himself to judge and condemn, even that which he does not understand. It is truly said that the best and most acceptable gift God ever made to man is judgment. Pliny calls presumption the plague of man, the nurse of false and erroneous opinions. Want of religion or false service to God proceeds from presumption. We do not esteem or understand Him enough, and our opinions and belief of the Divinity are not high and pure enough. I do not mean by this *enough*, proportion answerable to the greatness of God, of whom being infinite, it is impossible to conceive or believe enough—but enough in respect of what we can and ought to do. We do not elevate our thoughts sufficiently in our imagination of the Deity; our con-

ception of Him is unworthy, and we speak not only of His works, but of His majesty, will, and judgment with more confidence and boldness than we dare speak of an earthly prince. Many there are who would scorn such service, and consider themselves abused, and their honor violated, if we should speak of them and abuse their names in so base a manner.

There are those who desire to lead God, to flatter, to bend, and I might say to brave, threaten, and murmur against Him. As Cæsar, who told his pilot not to fear to hoist the sails and commit himself to the fury of the sea even against destiny and the will of Heaven, with only this assurance, that it was Cæsar whom he carried. Presumption has the temerity to condemn and reject as false all things that are not easily understood and that are unpalatable;

it is the property of those who have a good opinion of themselves, for finding their minds superior in some point, and that they see a little more clearly than the common sort, they assume for themselves a law and authority to decide and determine all things. It is great folly for a man to think he knows all that is to be known,—the jurisdiction and limits of nature, the capacity of the power and will of God,—and frame for himself the truth and falsehood of things. How much there is that at one time we have rejected as impossible, which afterward we have been obliged to accept; and on the other side, how many things have we received as articles of our faith, which have proved vanities and lies.

By presumption we make too much of ourselves. Man believes that the heavens, the stars, and all the celestial bodies were only made

for him, and the poor miserable wretch is in the meantime ridiculous. Yet he makes himself believe he is the master and commander of all; that all creatures, even those great luminous bodies, of whose least virtue he is ignorant, move but for him and to do him service. A gosling might think as much, and perhaps with more justice, for of all that man receives he has nothing in his own power or understanding, and is continually in doubt and fear, while a beast receives whatever comes from above without concern or complaint.

The height of presumption is for a man to persuade others to receive as canonical what he believes, to impose a belief as if it were an obligation. There is nothing to which men are more prone than expressing their own opinions, and thinking it a work of charity to persuade others

to think as they do, and if necessary for their purpose to add their own inventions to supply a want.

Dogmatists and those who would govern and give laws unto the world, bring in certain general and fundamental propositions that they call principles and pre-suppositions, which they say we must neither doubt nor dispute, and upon which they afterwards build whatever they please, and lead the world at their pleasure. But if these principles should be examined great untruths and weakness would be found in them. Every human proposition has as much authority as another, except where reason is the guide. Truth does not depend upon the authority and testimony of man; there are no principles in man if Divinity has not revealed them.

It is necessary for us to carefully guard and defend ourselves from

self-love and presumption, the plague of mankind, the enemy of wisdom, the gangrene and corruption of the soul. This foolish love of ourselves proceeds from ignorance, and we should know that we are in as great danger in our own hands as in another's.

Faith, modesty, and a serious acknowledgment of our defects are a great proof of good and sound judgment, right will, and desire for wisdom.

THE DIFFERENCE IN MEN.

There is nothing in this lower world wherein is found so great a difference as among men, except in the souls of men, for there is a greater difference between man and man than between man and beast, for a good beast comes nearer a base man than a base man to a great personage. This great difference in men comes

from the inward qualities and from the spirit, in which are so many degrees that it is an infinite thing to consider. The most notable diversity in man which concerns soul and body proceeds from his location on the earth, and accordingly from the different influences of country and climate. The features, complexion, and manners are different; also the faculties of the soul. As fruits and beasts vary according to the countries where they are found, so men are born more or less warlike, just, temperate, docile, religious, chaste, strong, and beautiful. As, for example, the Northerners excel in bodily strength; and to them belong the mechanical arts and military inventions, and from them have come the greatest armies. To the South belong religious superstition, speculative sciences, and indolence; while the middle regions are temperate in

all things,—and to sweeten, temper, and reduce excess to moderation is the work of wisdom.

The two fundamental principles of all human society are authority and obedience, power and subjection, superiority and inferiority. They are relatives, and mutually respect and protect each other, and are necessary in all assemblies and communities. To authority belong the honor and difficulty (these two commonly go together) the goodness, sufficiency, and all qualities of greatness, ability and courage. Authority is from heaven and of God. "All power is from God." It has been said that God does not appoint and establish men purely human and of common mould to rule, but such as by some divine touch and special virtue and gift from heaven excel others; and they are called heroes.

Obedience is necessary for the preservation of the public good; it is more necessary than wise leadership. Although authority and obedience are equally required in every state, the trouble caused by disobedience in subjects is far more dangerous than by ill government. Many states have prospered for a long time under the command of wicked princes and magistrates, the subjects obeying and accommodating themselves to the government. A wise man, being once asked why the Commonwealth of Sparta was so flourishing, and whether it was because their king commanded well, answered, "Nay; rather because the citizens obey well." If subjects once refuse to obey, and shake off the yoke, the state must necessarily fall.

MARRIAGE.

Notwithstanding marriage is the first and most important state, and,

as it were, the foundation of human society, it has been condemned and ignored by many great men. First, they account the band and obligation unjust, and a hard captivity, insomuch that by marriage a man is bound and enthralled by the cares and humors of another; and, if it happen that he has been mistaken in his choice, his life is ever afterwards most miserable. What greater injustice can there be than that for one hour's folly, a fault committed without malice, and many times by the advice of another, a man should be bound to an everlasting torment. It were better to cast himself into the sea, and end his miserable life, than to suffer, without intermission, the tempests of jealousy, rage, madness, and obstinacy. "To marry a wise man to a fool is to bind the living to the dead."

Marriage is a step to wisdom, holy

and honorable, instituted by God Himself in paradise. Afterwards the Son of God approved it, and honored a marriage with His presence, and there wrought His first miracle; and it serves for a sign of His union with the Church. If the choice be good, and well ordered, there is nothing more beautiful. It is a sweet partnership of life, full of constancy, trust, and mutual obligations. It is a fellowship not only of love, but friendship.

A social equality is very essential, and that equality whereby the wife is called the companion of her husband, the mistress of her home, as the husband, the master and lord. Their joint authority over the family is compared to an aristocracy.

It is a great happiness to live in peace, to have a companion a man may trust, and upon whom he can rely, and in order to do this he must

choose one who is true and loyal and then bind her to do well, by the trust and confidence he gives. "Faith being given binds faith again."

There is nothing more beautiful than a household well and peaceably governed. Not difficult to have, but for the reason that the multitude of affairs, though they are of no great importance, annoy and weary a man. Domestic thorns prick, because they are ordinary, and never at an end.

In all cases the master and mistress must take care to conceal their ignorance and insufficiency in the affairs of the house, for if servants have an opinion that the master does not look after things, they may chance to make his hair grow through his hood.

It has been said, a ducat in a man's purse will give him more honor than ten prodigally spent.

PARENTS AND CHILDREN.

The duty of parents and children is reciprocal. The carelessness of parents in the instruction of their children is as great an evil as the ingratitude of children toward their parents. Crates asked: "Why do men take so much pains in heaping up riches, and so little care of those to whom they will leave them?" It is as if a man should take care of his shoe, and not of his foot. What will he do with riches who is not wise, and knows not how to use them? Parents are doubly obliged to attend to their duties, not only because their children are tender plants, but the future hope of the commonwealth. There are some who take great pains to discover the inclinations of children, and for what employment they seem best fitted, but this is too uncertain. Better give them instruction, good,

and profitable, by which they are fitted for any pursuit. This is sure ground. The advice we would give is, to carry ourselves worthily and happily; and, with respect to the child, first, carefully to guard his soul, and keep it free from contagion and corruption of the world. To do this, one must diligently guard the gates, which are especially the ears, and then the eyes, that nothing evil comes near them. But a word is needed to make an evil almost past reparation. It was Plato's opinion that it was not right that servants and ignorant people should entertain children with their conversations, because their talk was vanity and foolishness, if not worse.

The second advice concerns not only the persons who have charge of the child, but their manner of conversation with him and the books he must read. Respecting the persons,

they must be honest men, well born, and of pleasing conversation, fuller of wisdom than science (learning), and agreeing in opinions, lest by contrary counsels, or a different way of proceeding, one by rigor, the other by flattery, they retard each other and trouble their charge. Their communications must not be small and frivolous, but great, serious, noble, and generous, such as may rule and enrich the understanding, opinions, and manners. The child must be taught what to love, to fear, and to desire; how he may judge between ambition and avarice, servitude and subjection. It is a mistake to think that a greater proportion of mind is required to understand history than vain and frivolous discourses. That child who knows how many children his mother has, and who are his uncles and cousins, can easily remember how many kings

there have been, and how many Cæsars were in Rome.

Let us carry ourselves towards children, not in an austere and severe manner, but sweetly, mildly, and cheerfully, and make them in love with virtue, wisdom, science, and honesty. Imperious and rude treatment breeds in children a hatred and detestation for all that they should love, and takes away their courage. "Parents provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged." Blows are for beasts that do not understand reason, and one accustomed to them is marred forever. But reason, the beauty of action, the desire for honesty and honor, and the approbation of all men, and hatred of baseness, dishonor, and reproach, these are the arms and spurs of children well born. That which cannot be done by reason and wisdom, can be done by force but to small purpose. For

all this let no man think that I approve of foolish indulgence, or fear to cause children sorrow; that is an extreme as bad as the former. It is like those who are afraid to hold by the hair of the head one in danger of drowning for fear of hurting him, and so let him perish.

Youth must be held in obedience and discipline, not bodily, like beasts and madmen, but a discipline spiritual, humane, liberal, and reasonable.

We should advise in teaching, to exercise, sharpen, and form the mind. Strive as the aim of instruction more for wisdom than for science and art, rather to form the judgment, consequently the will and conscience, than to fill the memory, and inflame the imagination; using reason, and mild persuasion rather than severity, which is the enemy to honor and true liberty. Learning and wisdom are very different, and wisdom is worth all the

art and science in the world. It exceeds learning as heaven surpasses earth. It is necessary and profitable to all; active, noble, honest and gracious. Learning may make us more humane, more courteous, but not more honest; it does not serve to sweeten our lives in ridding us of those evils that oppress us in the world, but on the contrary it increases and sharpens them. A wise man said that he that increases knowledge increases sorrow.

Wisdom is the rule of the soul, a spiritual beauty, which guides the judgment, giving all things their just due.

Do not mistake what I have said, or think me an enemy of erudition and learning. The evil is in the manner of study and ill instruction. Children learn from books and schools many excellent things with ill means and bad success, and all

their study profits them nothing, because they only care to stuff their memories. Presently they think themselves wise, remaining indigent and poor in the midst of their riches, and like Tantalus suffering with hunger surrounded by dainties; and so, with a memory stuffed, they continue fools. As men they do not apply their learning, while in the time they employ with great pains heaping together what they can rob from other men, they allow their own good to fall to the ground and never put in practice their natural gifts. This counsel I would give: A man must not gather and keep the opinions and knowledge of another that he may report them or employ them for show or ostentation. He must use them so as to make them his own; not only lodge them in his mind, but incorporate and transubstantiate them into himself. He

must not only refresh his mind with the dew of knowledge, but must make it essentially better, wiser, stronger, and more courageous, otherwise to what end does study serve? Wisdom is not only to be acquired by us but to be enjoyed. Like the bees, who do not carry away the flowers, but settle upon them and draw from them their spirit and virtue, and nourishing themselves, afterwards make good and sweet honey, which is all their own, and is no more thyme or sweet marjoram; so must man gather from books the marrow and spirit, never enthralling himself to retain the words by heart, and having drawn the good, feed his mind therewith, form his judgment, instruct and direct his conscience and opinions, and, in a word, make for himself a work wholly his own—that is to say, an honest man, wise and resolute.

There are two ways of teaching: one by word,—that is, by precepts, instructions, lectures, and conversation with honest and able men, filing and refining our wits against theirs, as iron is cleansed and beautified by the file—the other by action,—that is, by example, which is derived, not only from good men by imitation, but also from wicked ones by avoiding their errors, for there are some who profit better by repugnance of the evil they see in others. It is a special use of justice to condemn one that he may serve for an example to others. And old Cato was wont to say that wise men may learn more of fools than fools of wise men.

This second means, or manner, instructs with more ease and pleasure. To learn by precept is a long way. It is hard to understand well what we are thus taught, and, understanding, to retain and practise it; and

hardly can we promise ourselves to reap that fruit which is promised us. But example and imitation teach us beyond the work or action itself, stimulate us with more ardor, and promise us that glory which we see has been attained. Now these two means of profiting by speech and example are likewise twofold in the manner in which they are obtained, for they are drawn from intercourse with the living and reading the books of the dead. He who knows how to make use of books receives thereby great pleasure and comfort. He is eased of the burden of tedious idleness, occupied and kept from vain imaginations, and from outward things which vex and trouble.

The spirit and manners of men conform themselves to those with whom they commonly converse.

A teacher of youth must make his pupils speak and reason; often ex-

amine them, ask their opinions of whatever shall present itself, awaken their spirit by demands upon it, make them first give their opinions, and then grant them the same liberty to ask of others. If without questioning they are taught, it is in a manner labor lost, and the child is not profited; he lends only his ears; neither is it enough to have them give their opinions, they must maintain them and be able to give a reason, and not speak by rote. Commend their endeavors and give them encouragement. Although authorities may be given out of books, as the sayings of Cicero or Aristotle, yet it is not enough to recite them, they must judge of them, and so frame and fashion them for use that they may be applied to other subjects. It is not enough to report as history that Cato killed himself rather than fall into the hands of Cæsar;

and that Brutus and Cassius were the authors of the death of Cæsar; this is the least. I would have judgment given, whether they did well or not, whether they deserved well of their country, or conducted themselves according to wisdom, justice, or valor. Nothing must leave the hands before it has passed the judgment. "He who inquires after nothing, knows nothing." He who keeps not his mind busy, suffers it to rust. Fashion and mould the spirit to the pattern and model of the world and nature. Make it liberal, represent unto the youth all things, the universal face of nature, that the whole world may be his book; that whatever subject is discussed he may cast his thought upon the immensity of the world, upon the different habits and opinions which have been and are in the world touching that sub-

ject. The most noble minds are the most liberal. Nothing does more deprave and enthrall the mind of man than to let him have and understand but one opinion, belief, and manner of life.

What greater folly and weakness can there be than for a man to think all the world walks, lives, and dies according to his country; like those blockheads who, when they hear of manners and opinions of foreign countries contrary to their own, either will not believe them or absurdly condemn them as barbarous —so much are they enthralled and tied to their cradle. A kind of people, as they say, brought up in a bottle, who never see anything but through a hole.

Let the scholar take nothing upon credit, but examine all things with reason, and then let him choose.

THE BODY.

After the mind comes the body, and care is likewise to be taken of it, at the same time with the spirit, both making the entire man. Keep the child from delicacy, and pride in apparel, in sleeping, eating and drinking; accustom him to heat and cold; harden his muscles, as well as his mind; and make him lusty and vigorous.

MANNERS.

Concerning manners wherein both body and soul have a part, the advice is twofold—to avert evil, and to ingraft and nourish the good. The first is the more necessary, and therefore the greatest care must be taken, and it must be done in time, for there is no time too speedy to prevent the birth and growth of ill manners and faults which are to be feared in youth: as to lie, a base

vice: bashfulness, which must be corrected by study; all affectations and peculiarities in speech, gait, and gesture, which are a testimony of vanity and vainglory, and mar all that is good.

Never allow children to have their own way by such means as anger, sullenness, or obstinacy; they should learn that these are qualities altogether useless and unprofitable.

Ingraft in them good and honest manners; and first instruct them to fear and reverence God, to speak seldom and soberly of Him, of His power, eternity, wisdom, will, and all His works, not indifferently, and upon all occasions, but with reverence; not to be overscrupulous in the mysteries and points of religion, but to conform to the government and discipline of the Church. Teach them to cherish candor, modesty, and integrity, and to be honest, out

of an honorable and honest mind, not from fear, or through hope of honor, or profit, or other consideration than virtue itself.

We know that affection is reciprocal and natural between parents and children, but that of parents toward their children is far the stronger. That of children seems rather the payment of a debt and a thankful acknowledgment for a benefit received than a purely natural love. Moreover, he who gives and does good to another loves more than he who receives and is indebted: those things are most beloved which cost us most; that is dearest to us which we come most dearly by; and to nourish and bring up children is a greater charge than to receive these benefits.

True and fatherly love is shown in wise governing. Parents should receive their children into their soci-

ety, and if capable, when they are old enough, into partnership in their wealth; admit them to their counsel, contribute to their recreation and pastimes, win their confidence and opinions. We condemn the austere and imperious carriage of those who never look upon children, or speak to them except with authority. Parents should form their minds to duty by reason, and not have recourse to means more tyrannical than fatherly. God himself refuses not the name of Father.

The duty of children toward their parents is natural and religious; it is so certain that it cannot be dispensed with for any other duty or love, be it ever so great. If it shall happen that a man sees his father and his son in danger at the same time, and cannot rescue both, he must forsake the son and go to his father though his love for his son is greater. And

the reason is because the duty of a son towards his father is the more ancient and can be abrogated by no other. Now this duty consists of five points comprehended in these words: "Honor thy father and thy mother." The first is reverence, which is that high and holy esteem which children ought to have for their parents. The second is obedience. The third is to succor parents in all their needs, and to care for them in their old age. We have an example of this in the brute kingdom, for the little ones of the stork, as St. Basil affirms, feed and care for the old mother, and couple themselves together to carry her on their backs, love teaching them this art; and for this cause the Hebrews call this bird *Chasida*, that is to say, the charitable bird.

Fourth, children should not attempt anything of importance with-

out the advice, consent, and approbation of parents. Fifth, mildly and gently to endure their vices, imperfections, and severity. A child will not find these duties difficult if he consider how much care he has been, and with what affection he has been brought up.

MASTERS AND SERVANTS.

The use of slaves and the absolute power of lords and masters over them is monstrous and ignominious in the nature of man; and is not found among beasts. There are slaves born, and those made by war, voluntary ones who sell their liberty for money, and in some parts of Christendom those that give and vow themselves to another for ever. This voluntary captivity is the strangest of all, and most against nature.

The duty of masters toward their servants as well as slaves (inferior

servants) is, not to treat them unkindly, remembering they are men and of the same nature as themselves, and only fortune has made a difference which is very variable, amusing itself by making great men small and small great. Therefore the difference is not so wide. Treat them kindly, seeking rather to be beloved than feared. Instruct them with religious counsel and those things requisite for their health and safety. The duty of servants is to honor their masters and yield them obedience and fidelity, not only outwardly and for reward, but heartily, seriously, for conscience' sake, and without dissimulation.

THE NECESSITIES OF THE STATE.

Having spoken of private authority, we come to public power, that of the state, which is rule, dominion, or a certain order in command-

ing and obeying, that is the prop, cement, and soul of human things, a vital point. It is the bond of society, which cannot otherwise subsist. It is the universal spirit, whereby so many millions of men breathe.

Greatness and power are so much desired because all the good there is in them appears outwardly, and the ill is altogether inward. To command others is a thing as difficult as it is great, as beautiful as it is divine. The title of ruler (the outward display) is gratifying and pleasant, but the burden inside is hard and irksome. It is an honorable servitude, a noble misery, a rich captivity. But how often are these rulers less qualified by nature than those beneath them. The same appetites move a fly and an elephant. Can it be other than a great burden to govern people, since in ruling one's self there is so much difficulty? It is easier and

more pleasant to follow than to guide, to obey than to command, and it is required that he who commands must be a better man than he who is commanded. The first thing required is the knowledge of the state. The first of all things is to know with whom a man has to deal. After this knowledge virtue is required, as necessary in a ruler as in the state. Cyrus said: "It is a first necessity that he who is above all should be better than all." For common report gathers and spreads abroad the actions and speeches of him who governs. He is in the eye of all, and can no more hide himself than the sun, and therefore whatever good or ill he does will be talked of. Now the eyes of the lesser are always upon the great, and it is important for him and his people that a ruler should respect himself as well as the state, and that his subjects

have a good opinion of him. Belief in a sovereign is the nurse of peace and quietness. We do not need commands as much as examples. There are four princely virtues, piety, justice, valor, and clemency. The piety of a ruler consists in his care for the maintenance and preservation of religion. This redounds to his own honor and security. It is religion that maintains human society. If the fear and respect for it did not bridle and keep men in order, all manner of wickedness and cruelties would exist. Great personages are beset by three kinds of people, flatterers, inventors of imposts or tributes, and informers, who, under the pretext of zeal and friendship, or loyalty and reformation, would ruin both ruler and country.

Seneca said, "Trust makes way for the treacherous to do mischief." It is necessary therefore that one cover

himself with this buckler of distrust, which the wisest have thought to be a great part of prudence and wisdom.

Trust but few and those known by long experience. Open distrust wrongs and invites as much deceit as an overcareless confidence, for many by showing too much fear of being deceived show how they may be.

A ruler must be just, keeping well and inviolably his faith, the foundation wall of justice. Then he must insist that his justice be maintained in others, for it is his proper charge, and for that purpose he is installed.

Clemency, a princely virtue, is mildness and leniency. It lessens and qualifies the rigor of justice with judgment and discretion. It moderates and sweetly manages all things, forgives those who are faulty, rescues those who are fallen, and saves those

who are nearly lost. It is in a ruler what humanity is in a subject. It is contrary to cruelty and extreme rigor, not to justice, from which it does not so much differ, but softens and moderates it. One beloved will do more through love than through fear.

The liberality of a ruler which consists in tax and show serves to small purpose. No credit is gained from display made through excessive taxation, for to the spectators of these triumphs it seems that they feed their eyes at the expense of their stomachs. A ruler should think that he has nothing wholly his own. That liberality is more commendable which consists in bestowing gifts, but even in this he must be well advised, giving to those who deserve it and have been of service to the country.

Liberality likewise must be spun

with a gentle thread, little by little, and not all together, for that which is done speedily is soon forgotten. Pleasant things must be done with ease and leisure, that one may have time to enjoy them. Things rude and cruel (if they must needs be done) should be executed quickly. A prodigal ruler is worse than a covetous one, but well ordered liberality is profitable both to ruler and state.

Magnanimity and courage become a ruler. He has need of faithful friends to be his assistants. Great burdens have need of great help. He must provide himself with good counsel and such men as know how to give it. These are his true treasures.

Counsellors must be first faithful. The two greatest philosophers have said that it is a sacred and divine thing to deliberate well and to give

good counsel. They must be skilled in state affairs, experienced and tried. They must be wise and prudent, not impulsive, for such men are too easily moved. "These fiery wits are more fit for innovation than administration." (Curtius.) It is necessary in giving good counsel to be courageous, without flattery, ambiguity, or design, not sparing the truth but speaking what is just and necessary. For although liberty of speech and fidelity hurt and offend for a time, yet afterwards they are reverenced and esteemed.

The Emperor Julian once said to his courtiers who had commended him for his justice, "Perhaps I should be proud of these praises, if they were spoken by those who dared to accuse me, and to censure my actions when they deserved it." A ruler must be without opinionative obstinacy and a spirit of contradiction,

which trouble and hinder all good deliberation; he must sometimes change his opinion, which is not inconstancy, but prudence.

For a wise man does not always go by the same way, but as a good mariner who trims his sails according to the wind and tide, he will often turn and arrive at a place obliquely when he cannot do it directly and by a straight line. A counsellor must not be influenced by passion, envy, avarice, or private interest, the deadly poison of judgment and good understanding. He must avoid presumptuous confidence and precipitation, which are the enemies of all good counsel. A wise man considers and reconsiders, weighing all that might happen, that he may execute with boldness.

Again, to keep secret, counsels and deliberations is very necessary in the management of affairs. "Great

affairs cannot be sustained by him who cannot be secret." (Curtius.) Secrecy is the soul of counsel.

Now a ruler must make choice of such good counsellors, either from his own knowledge and judgment, or, if he cannot do so, by their reputation, which seldom deceives, as one of them once said to his Prince: "Hold us for what we are esteemed to be." Let him take heed that he choose not his favorites, and having chosen his counsellors, let him wisely make use of them. After counsel we place treasure—a great power; the sinews, the feet and hands of the state. There is no sword so sharp or penetrating as silver, no master so imperious, no orator that so wins the hearts and wills of men as riches, and therefore a ruler must provide that his treasury never fails. To increase the income there are divers means and various resources:

the revenue of the country, which must be used and managed without alienating it; conquests from an enemy, which must be profitably employed, not prodigally dissipated; the entrance and clearing of merchandise into various ports; a tax upon foreigners as well as upon subjects, a means just, lawful, ancient, and general; not to permit the traffic or transportation of the necessaries of life, nor of raw or unwrought wares, to the end that the subject may have work and gain the profit of his own labor; but to permit the exportation of manufactured articles and the bringing in of raw material, but not of the wrought or manufactured; and in all things to charge the stranger more than the subject; for a foreign duty increases the treasury and enriches the country; to moderate, nevertheless, the imposts upon those things

which are brought in necessary for life.

WARS.

A man must arm himself against war to the end that it may not trouble him. "He who desires peace, let him provide for war."

War has its laws and ordinances as well as peace. First it must be just, for justice is as much before valor as deliberation is before execution. God favors just wars, and gives the victory to whom He pleases, and therefore we must make ourselves worthy this favor by the justice of the enterprise, and above all avoid ambition, avarice, and anger.

"Wise men wage war for the sake of peace and sustain labor in hope of rest." In war there is more need of hands than of names. There must be care in the choice of men;

the best soldier is not the mercenary adventurer, but he who has the good of his country at heart. He is more patient, more obedient and courageous. Victory does not consist in numbers, but in force and valor.

After choice comes discipline, for it is not enough to have chosen those who are capable and likely to prove good soldiers. Nature makes few men valiant, it is good instruction and discipline that do it. Now the principal point of discipline is obedience, and a soldier must fear his captain more than an enemy. Soldiers are the body, captains and leaders the soul, or life of an army. True valor stirs not the tongue, but the hands; does not talk, but executes; great talkers are small doers.

There is nothing in war that must be despised, and many times that which seems of small moment often yields great results.

Victory must not be stained with insolence, but accepted modestly; one needs to remember the perpetual flux and reflux of this world and the alternating of prosperity and adversity.

"Fortune is brittle and slippery; when it shines it breaks."

To the vanquished, wisdom is necessary to consider his loss at its worst, and afterwards with a good courage to renew his strength and hope for better fortune; it is better to die with honor than live in dishonor. There is a question whether stratagem or courage is the more requisite in war. Alexander would take no advantage of the obscurity of the night, saying he liked not thieving victories; "I had rather be sorry for my fortune than victory should shame me."

"Security is the most common beginning of calamity." Fortune

and success turn the mind of a noble and generous conqueror from wrath to mercy.

LAWYERS, DOCTORS, TEACHERS.

It is one of the vanities and follies of man to prescribe laws and rules that exceed the use and capacity of men, as some philosophers and teachers have done. They propose strange and exalted forms of life, so difficult and austere that the practice of them is impossible for any time, and the attempt even dangerous to many. These are castles in the air, as the commonwealth of Plato, beautiful and worthy imaginations; but the man has never yet been found that put them in practice. The Sovereign and perfect Lawgiver took heed of this, who in Himself, His life and doctrine, did not seek these extravagant forms beyond the common capabilities of men; and therefore

He called His yoke easy and His burden light. They who have instituted and ordered their society under His name have very wisely considered the matter, and though they make special profession of virtue and devotion, and to serve the public weal above all others, nevertheless they differ very little in their manner of living from the ordinary and civil life.

Many times these goodly law-makers, are the first law-breakers, for they often do quite the contrary to that which they require of others. Reason is the life of the law.

THE VULGAR SORT.

The people we call the vulgar sort are strange creatures, inconstant and variable, who love confusion and go to war without judgment, reason, or discretion. "It is the custom of the vulgar sort to despise the present,

desire the future, and praise and extol that which is past." They are malicious, envious, and treacherous, wishing all ill to those who are well and honorably spoken of. They care neither for public good nor common honesty. "Every one has his private spur." They are monsters who have nothing but a mouth, tongues which cease not; they speak all things but know nothing, they look upon all but see nothing. Show them the cudgel and they will admire you, do good to them and they will despise you. The vulgar multitude is the mother of ignorance, vanity, injustice, and idolatry; their *mot* is, "The voice of the people is the voice of God," but we may say, "The voice of the people is the voice of fools." Now the beginning of wisdom is for a man to keep himself clear and free, and not allow himself

to be carried away with popular opinions.

NOBILITY.

Nobility is a quality not common everywhere, but honorable, and rightly esteemed for its public utility. According to the general and common opinion, it is a quality of race or stock. Aristotle says that it is the antiquity of a race and of riches. Plutarch calls it the virtue of a race, meaning a certain habit and quality continued by descent. What this quality is all do not agree saving in this that it is profitable to the common weal, for to some and the greater part it is military, to others political, literary to the learned and palatine to those attached to the service of the prince. But military nobility is accounted most worthy, for besides its service to the country it is painful, labori-

ous and dangerous, and so by excellency it carries the title of valor. A long continuance of this quality by many degrees and races makes what is called a gentleman; that is to say, of a race, house, family, carrying for a long time the same name and profession. For he is truly and entirely noble who makes a special profession of public virtue, serving his prince and country, and who is descended from parents, and ancestors, that have done the same. There are some who separate these two conditions and think that one of them is sufficient for true nobility. If we compare the two, that which is natural or on account of birth is the least, though many out of their vanity think otherwise. "I scarce account those things ours which descend from our ancestors, or anything which we ourselves have not accomplished; no man has lived

for our glory. Neither are we to account that ours which has been before us."

What greater folly can there be than to glory in that which is not our own. They who have nothing commendable in themselves but this nobility of flesh and blood make much of it, have it in their mouths, and it is the mark by which they are known and a sign they have nothing else. What good is it to a blind man that his parents had excellent sight, or to him who stammers, that his grandfather was eloquent?

Personal and acquired honor has conditions altogether contrary, its nobility consists in good and profitable effects, not in dreams and imaginations. "A mind well disposed to virtue makes him noble, who, upon what accident or condition soever, is able to raise himself above fortune." (Seneca.) Natural and ac-

quired nobility are very often and willingly found together, and so make a perfect honor. For a man to know that he has sprung from honorable ancestors, and such as have deserved well of their country, is a strong obligation and spur to the exploits of virtue. It is a foul thing to degenerate and belie a man's own race.

HONOR.

Some say that honor is the price and recompense of virtue or the prerogative of a good opinion. It is a privilege which draws its principal essence from virtue. It has also been called the shadow of virtue, which sometimes goes before as the shadow of the body, and sometimes follows. But to speak truly, it is the rumor of a beautiful and virtuous action which rebounds from a man's soul to the view of the world,

and reflecting him, brings him the testimony of that which others believe of him.

But the question is, what are the actions to which honor is due? It is generally due to those who perform their duty in whatever belongs to their profession, although it may be neither a famous nor profitable one; as he who upon the stage plays the part of a servant well is no less commended than he who represents the person of a king, and he who cannot work on statues of gold, may show the perfection of his art even in earth and leather. All cannot be called to manage great affairs, but all deserve commendation who do what they have to do, well.

The marks of honor are various, but the best and most beautiful are those which are without profit and gain. It happens sometimes that it is a greater honor not to have the

marks of honor having deserved them, than to have them; as Cato said, "It is more honorable to me, that every man should ask me why I have not a statue erected in the market-place, than they should ask me why I have it." Honor is so much esteemed and sought after that a man will undertake and endure almost anything to attain it, regarding it even more than life itself. Nevertheless it is a matter of small moment, uncertain and a stranger to him that is honored. It does not enter a man, nor is it essential to him; it stays without and rests in his name, which carries all the honor and dishonor. So that a man is said to have either a good name or a bad one. All the good or evil that can be said of Cæsar is carried in his name. Now the name is nothing of the nature and substance of the thing, it is only the image which

presents it, the mark which distinguishes it from others. Whatsoever valor, worth, and perfection the thing has in itself inwardly, if it produces nothing good it is incapable of honor, and is as if it were not.

SCIENCE OR LEARNING.

Learning is a beautiful ornament and very profitable to those who know how to use it, but in what rank to place it, or how to prize it, all are not of one opinion, and therefore commit two contrary faults; some by esteeming it too highly, others too little. For my part, I place it beneath honesty, sanctity, wisdom, and virtue, and yet dare rank it with dignity, natural nobility, and military valor, and think they may well dispute the precedence.

As sciences are different in their subjects and matter, so are they in their utility, honesty, and necessity,

and also in their gain and glory. Some sciences are theoretical, concerned only with speculations. Others are realistic, consisting in the search after the knowledge of things that are without us, whether they are natural or supernatural. Again some are particular, teaching the tongue to speak, the mind to reason; while others are practical and concerned with action.

Those sciences which have most honesty and utility, and least glory, vanity, and mercenary gain, are to be preferred to all others; and the practical, such as moral science and political economy, which respect the good of man, are absolutely the best; teaching him to live well, to die well, to command and obey well; and diligently to be studied by all who desire to be wise. After these comes natural science; an aid to the knowledge of whatever is in the

world fit for our use, and likewise teaching us to admire the greatness, goodness, wisdom, and power of the Creator. All others are vain, and to be studied cautiously. St. Paul's advice is: "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy."

Learning which is acquired is an accumulation, a storing up of the good of another—that is, a collection of all that a man has seen, heard, and read in books. Now the garner and storehouse where this provision is kept, the treasury of science and all acquired good, is the memory. He who has a good memory, the fault is his own if he lacks knowledge, for he has the key to it.

Knowledge is the wealth of the spirit.

A wise man lives upon his own revenue, for wisdom is properly a man's own.

DESIRING WISDOM.

A man aspiring to wisdom should above all things know himself,—a difficult matter, for every one delights to deceive, rob, hide, and betray himself, flattering and tickling himself to make himself laugh, excusing his defects, and setting a high value upon the little good he has, winking continually lest he should too clearly see his own acts. Now he who would be truly wise must always suspect whatever seems to please the greater number of people; he must look into and judge what is good and true in itself and not be borne along by the multitude, for the worst thing that can be said of a man is that the whole world approves of him. Once Phocion, seeing the people highly applaud something he had said, turned to his friends who stood by him and asked, "Has any folly unwittingly escaped my

mouth, or any loose or wicked word, that all these people do approve me?"

Yet if you are not of the world, the world will hate you.

We must as much as possible preserve ourselves from the judgment and opinions of the illiterate and ill-disposed, and without any stir keep our own opinions and thoughts to ourselves, remaining in the world without being of it.

"I rather choose to seem a fool with ease,
Than to be wise indeed, and yet displease."

We should beware of spiritual leprosy which comes from not taking a proper interest in the affairs of life, and of growing too fond of ourselves.

A wise man will never undertake more than he can accomplish; he will remember that to carry a burden it is necessary to have more strength than burden; but if it happen that by

accident or imprudence he should be engaged in a vocation distasteful to him, and see no escape, it is the part of wisdom to resolve to bear it and to adapt himself to it as much as possible; like bees, who from thyme, a sharp and dry herb, gather sweet honey, and, as the proverb is, make a virtue of necessity.

Wisdom is a regular managing of the soul, a sweet harmony of our judgment, will, and manners, and a constant health of mind; whereas the passions, on the contrary, are the furious outbursts and rebounds of folly. Passions are more easily avoided than moderated. We can guide in the beginning, and hold them at our mercy, but once thoroughly aroused they carry us.

All things at their birth are feeble and tender. In their weakness we do not discover the danger, and in their full growth and strength know

not how to withstand them; as we often see when men who have entered easily and lightly into quarrels, law, and contentions are forced to settle as best they can.

In all our dealings with men, we must be prudent from the beginning. "Undertake coldly, pursue ardently."

The true privilege of a wise and active man is, to judge of all things, not to be bound to any, but to be ready and open to all opinions.

In all the outward and common actions of life, a man should accommodate himself to custom, but without determination, affirmation, or condemnation of the ideas of others; always ready to entertain better opinions if they arise, and not offended with those who differ from him. Let him rather desire to hear what may be said, that he may exercise his judgment and search for truth.

Since there are a thousand lies for one truth, a thousand opinions of one and the same thing, and but one that is true, why should we not examine with the instrument of reason, which is the best, the most honest, and most profitable.

LIBERTY OF SPIRIT AND JUDGMENT.

Is it possible that among so many laws, customs, opinions, and manners that are in the world contrary to our own, there are none good but ours? Has all the world besides been mistaken? And who doubts others think not the same of us. The wise man will judge all; nothing shall escape him.

What can a holy man have above the profane, if his spirit, mind, and principles are in slavery?

They shall govern as long as they will my hand, and my tongue, but

not my spirit, for that, by their leave, has another master.

He who would bridle the spirit of man is a great tyrant.

Now a wise man will carry himself outwardly, for public reverence and in a manner to offend no one, according to the law, custom, and ceremony of the country; but inwardly he will judge of the truth as it is according to reason, and many times he may condemn that which he outwardly does. For example, in all humility I take off my hat and keep my head uncovered before my superior, for the custom of my country requires it, but yet I have leave to judge that the custom of the East is far better, to salute and do reverence by laying the hand upon the breast without uncovering the head to the detriment of the health.

If I were in the East, I would take my repast sitting upon the ground or

leaning upon my elbow, or half lying, looking upon the table sideways, as they do there, and yet I should not cease to judge the manner of sitting upright at table, my face toward it, as our custom is, the more comfortable and preferable. These are examples of small weight, and there are many like them. Take another of more importance. I yield my consent that the dead shall be interred and left to the mercy of the worm, because it is now the common custom almost everywhere, but I cease not to judge that the ancient manner of burning bodies, and gathering together the ashes, is more noble and cleanly. Religion itself teaches and commands to dispose of all things after this manner, as of that which was not eaten of the paschal lamb and the consecrated host; and why should not our bodies be treated with like respect? What

can be more dishonorable to a body than to cast it into the earth, there to corrupt? It seems to me to be the utmost punishment that can be inflicted upon infamous persons and offenders; honest and honorable men should be treated with more respect.

A wise man considers calmly and without passion all things, is not obstinate, but always ready to receive the truth, or what seems to have the best semblance of truth. There is nothing certain, nothing in nature but doubt, nothing certain but uncertainty. "The only thing certain is, that nothing is certain. This one thing know I, that I know nothing."

Truth and falsehood enter us by the same gate, hold the same place and credit, and maintain themselves by the same means.

There is no one opinion held by all, none that is not disputed, none of which the contrary is not main-

tained. It is the doctrine and practice of the greatest philosophers, dogmatists, and affirmers to doubt, inquire, and search, giving to all things no stronger title than probability and possibility; by problematical questions, rather inquiring than instructing. "They will seem not so much to think what they say as to exercise their wits with the difficulty of the matter"; solacing their spirits with pleasant and subtle inventions, "which they rather feign wittily than know skilfully."

Aristotle, the most decided, the Prince of dogmatists and peremptory affirmers, the god of pedants, how often has he been crossed in his opinions? Not knowing how to explain the question of the soul,—a point where he is almost always unlike himself,—and in other things he did not understand, we find him ingenuously confessing at

times the great weakness of man in finding and knowing the truth.

Opposed to this academical staidness there are others who glory in their obstinate opinions, whether they are right or wrong; preferring violent opposition, against which they may exercise their wit and skill, to peaceful discussion with a man who, doubtful, reserves his judgment.

"God knows the thought of man how vain it is." Why should it not be as lawful to doubt, to hold in suspense what we are not assured of, as it is to affirm? How shall we be capable of knowing more or discovering how little we know if we grow firm in our opinions, if we settle and rest ourselves in certain things, and in such a manner that we seek no further, nor examine that which we think we hold? Some consider this doubt a shame and weakness, be-

cause they do not perceive what it is, nor that the greatest men have made confession of it. They blush and have not the heart to say frankly, I know not, because they are possessed with the presumption of learning. They do not know that there is a kind of ignorance and doubt more learned, more noble and generous, than all their certainty. It is that which has made Socrates so renowned, and held for the wisest of men. It is the science of sciences and the fruit of all our studies. It is the modest, mild, innocent, and hearty acknowledgment of the mystical height of truth and the poverty of our human condition.

Here I would tell you that I caused to be engraved over the gate of my little house, which I built at Condom, in the year 1600, these words, "I know not."

He who thinks he knows some-

thing knows not yet what he ought to know.

It is not the truth and nature of things that stir and trouble us, but opinions. The truth does not enter or lodge in us by its own strength and authority, for if it were so all things would be received alike, after the same manner and with equal credit, as truth is always uniform.

The world is led by opinion, that which I believe I cannot make another accept, and that which I firmly believe to-day I cannot assure myself I shall believe to-morrow. How often has time made us see we have been deceived in our thoughts, and forced us to change our opinion.

To keep the mind in peace and tranquillity, free from agitations, ambition, presumption, and obstinacy in opinion (which cause sects, heresies, and seditions), does more

service to religion and Divine operation than anything else.

God has created in man a desire to know the truth; and the better to prepare ourselves for this revelation, and to receive His Holy Spirit, we must cleanse and purify our thoughts, be free from opinions, belief, and affections, dead to self and the world, that God may live and work in us.

"Purge the old leaven, and put off the old man."

And so it would seem an excellent method in introducing Christianity among the heathen to begin with these propositions: that all the wisdom of the world is but vanity; that the world is torn and unsettled by the fanatic opinions of man's brain; that God has created man to know the truth, but that he cannot know it by any human means;

that it is necessary that God Himself, in whom it dwells, should reveal it as He does. And to prepare himself for this revelation, man must first renounce all opinions and beliefs with which the mind is already preoccupied, and offer himself pure and ready to receive it. Having gained this point, it is necessary to present the principles of Christianity as sent from heaven, brought by that Perfect Messenger of the Divinity, confirmed by so many proofs and testimonies. So in this modest delay of opinion we see a great means to true piety, not only to receive it, but to preserve it.

UNIVERSALITY OF SPIRIT.

A wise man views and considers the whole universe; he is a citizen of the world, like Socrates, and holds in his affections all humanity. He sees like the sun with an equal and indif-

ferent regard, and, as from a watch-tower, all the changes and course of things; not changing himself, but remaining always the same; which is the livery of the Divinity and the high privilege of a wise man.

Partiality is an enemy to liberty, and overrules the mind so that it cannot judge aright. To better attain this universality of spirit, this general impartiality, we must consider these points: the great inequality and difference of men, in their nature, form, and condition; the diversity of laws, customs, manners, and religions; the different opinions and reasonings of the philosophers concerning unity and plurality, the eternal and temporal, the beginning and end and the duration of time. The Egyptian priests told Herodotus that, since their first king, the sun had changed his course four times. The Chaldeans, in the time of

Diodorus, had a register of seven thousand years. Plato said they of the city of Sais had memorials in writing of eight thousand years, and that the city of Athens was built a thousand years before the city of Sais. Zoroaster and others affirmed that Socrates lived six thousand years before Plato. Others have said that the world has been from all time; and great philosophers have held the world for a god, made by another greater than it; or, as Plato and others argue, that from the motions it is a creature composed of a body and of a soul,—the soul lodging in the centre, disposing and spreading itself by musical numbers into all parts; and that the heavens and the stars are composed of bodies and a soul,—mortal by reason of their composition, immortal by the decree and determination of the Creator. According to ancient and

most authentic writings, and founded upon reason, there are many worlds; in this world there is nothing alone, but all kinds multiplied in numbers, and it does not seem to have a semblance of truth that God made this world only and without a companion.

By what we have learned of the discovery of the new world, the East and West Indies, we see that some ancient writers have been deceived, thinking to have found the measure of the habitable earth, for now behold another world almost like our own; and who will doubt but that in time there will be yet others discovered. If Ptolemy and other ancient writers have been deceived, why should not he also be who affirms to the contrary?

Secondly, we see that the zones which were thought uninhabitable from their excessive heat and cold are habitable.

Thirdly, in these new countries we find that almost all things which we esteem so much, holding that they were first revealed and sent from heaven, have been commonly believed and observed; many of them were in use a thousand years before we had any tidings of them, both in the matter of religion,—as the belief in one Father of us all, of the universal deluge, of one God who once lived in the form of man, undisciplined and holy; of the day of judgment and the resurrection of the dead;—and in the matter of policy, as,—that the elder son should succeed to the inheritance.

There is nothing said, held, or believed, at one time and in one place, which is not likewise said and believed in another, and contradicted and condemned elsewhere.

The best means to maintain ourselves in tranquillity and liberty is to

lend ourselves to others, but to give ourselves to none, and to take our affairs into our hands, not to place them in our hearts. We must know how to distinguish and separate ourselves from our public cares, our friends, and our neighbors; one should comply with the customs of other men and the world, contribute to society those offices and duties requisite, but with moderation and discretion. A man may perform his duties without haste or excitement, and they deceive themselves very much who think that business is not well done if done without clamor and clatter. A wise man will serve and make use of the world just as he finds it, and he will likewise consider how to keep and carry himself apart from it.

Enough has been said of this perfect liberty of judgment wherein I have rather insisted, because I know

that it does not please the palate of the world; it is the enemy of pedantry, as wisdom is, but it preserves us from being opinionative gainsayers; and a man maintaining himself in peaceable and assured modesty and noble liberty of spirit, is a fair flower and ornament of wisdom.

LAWS AND CUSTOMS.

Laws and customs are maintained in credit, not because they are just and good, but because they are laws and customs; this is the mystical foundation of their power. A wise man observes them freely and simply for public reverence, and for their authority. Law and custom establish their authority differently, custom little by little and without force, and by the common consent of all. The law springs up in a moment with authority and power. Seneca said: "We are not led by reason,

but misled by custom, and we hold that best which is most used."

This advice I would give to him who would be wise, to keep and observe both in word and deed the laws and customs which he finds established wherever he may be, and likewise to respect and obey magistrates and all superiors, but always with a noble spirit and generous manner, not servilely nor pedantically, and withal not to condemn foreign laws or customs, but freely and soundly to examine them, judging with reason only. After these two, law and custom, comes ceremony. A wise man must defend himself from this captivity. I do not mean that it should be met with a loose incivility, for he must forgive the world something, and as much as he can outwardly conform to that which is in practice, but not to enthrall himself with it; and with gallant and gener-

ous boldness know how to leave it, when he will, and in such a manner that all men may know that it is not from carelessness, ignorance, nor contempt, but because he would not suffer his judgment to be corrupted with such vanity, and that he lends himself to the world when it pleases him, but never gives himself.

HONESTY.

Honesty is the first principle of wisdom. All applaud it whether truthfully or but outwardly, and confess themselves its servants and affectionate followers. It will be difficult to show that true and essential probity we here require. Actions of virtue are many times nothing but masks, they carry the outward countenance but have not the essence. Therefore to know which is the true honesty, we must not look at the outward action, that is but the sign

and simplest token, and often a cloak to cover villainy; we must penetrate into the inward part, and know the motive which causes the strings to vibrate, which is the soul and life that gives motion to all.

There are men, honest through accident and occasion, and not in spirit and truth; it is easy to discover them by their want of stability, and by sounding them, for in one and the same action they will give various opinions. This instability proceeds from outward influences which easily move and stir them.

The true honesty which I require in him who will be wise, is free, manly, and generous, uniform and consistent. Every man should be, or should desire to be an honest man, because he is a man; and he who cares not to be such is a monster. It is necessary that honesty should grow in man, by that inward

instinct which is God-given, not from any outward cause or inducement.

A man desires to have all his possessions good and sound, his body, judgment, and memory, even his hose and his shoes, and why will he not likewise have his will and conscience good?

What though a man does not receive recompense for his honesty, what can concern him so much as his own character? This is, as it were, not to care how bad the horse is so the saddle is good. If a man is honest for honor or reputation, from fear of the law or punishment, there is an end of his honesty. I would have him good, firm, and honest for the love of himself, because it is absolutely required of him by nature. And the pattern for honesty he will find in this nature itself, which is the universal reason that shines in every one of us. He that works

according to it works truly according to God, for it is God, or at least His fundamental law that has brought it into the world. God and nature are in the world as in a state the king,—the author, and founder, and the fundamental law for the preservation and government of the state.

Nature is a ray of light from the Divinity, a stream and dependence of the eternal law which is God Himself and His Will. Behold in us, then, an essential, radical, and fundamental honesty, growing in us from its own roots, from the seed of that universal reason which is in the soul, maintaining itself strong and invincible, by which a man works according to God, nature, and the universal order of the world.

"All goodness is natural, vice unnatural."

True honesty is a right and firm disposition of the will to follow the

counsels of reason; and as the mariner's needle never rests until it points towards the north, and thus directs aright, so man is never tranquil until he sees this and directs the course of his life, manners, judgment, and will according to the Divine natural law, which is an inward light whereof all others are but beams. To perfect our work we still need the grace of God by which life is given to honesty, goodness, and virtue.

Honesty in the soul is like a good organist, whose touch is true and according to art; the grace and spirit of God is the blast which gives life to the touch, and makes the instrument speak with pleasant melodies.

This last good does not consist in long discourses, precepts, and instructions, neither is it attained by our own act or labor; it is a free gift from above, and so we call it grace. But we must desire it, and ask for it

both humbly and ardently. O God, vouchsafe of Thy infinite goodness to look upon me with the eye of Thy clemency, to accept my desire and my work, which Thou hast implanted, to the end that it may return to Thee, and that Thou mayst finish what Thou hast begun, and so be both my Alpha and my Omega. Sprinkle me with Thy grace, keep me and account me Thine.

The true remedy by which we are cleansed and healed of our sin, is a serious and modest confession of our faults; excuse is a remedy invented by the author of evil. There is a proverb which says, "Sin makes itself a garment, but it is without warmth."

Religion consists in the knowledge of God and of ourselves, and the office of religion is to join us to the Author and Giver of all good; and

so long as we continue firm in our confidence in God we are preserved, but when He is separated from us we faint and languish. We must be sincere, obedient, and kind, if we would be fit to receive religion, and to believe and live under the law. By reverence and obedience we should subject our judgment, and suffer ourselves to be led by authority, "submitting our understanding to the obedience of faith."

PIETY.

Piety ranks first among our duties, and here it is very easy to err and be mistaken. It is a fearful thing to consider the great diversity among the religions that have been in the world, and still more the strangeness of some of them, so unreasonable that it is a wonder the mind of man should have been infatuated with the impostures; for it seems

there is nothing in the world, high or low, which has not been deified, and that has not found a place wherein to be worshipped. They all agree in many things, are almost alike in their foundation and principles: the belief in one God, the Author of all things, His providence and love toward mankind, in the immortality of the soul, reward for the good, punishment for the wicked after this life, and a certain outward profession, in praying, honoring, and serving God: they have also their difference, by which they are distinguished, and each prefers itself above the rest, as the truest. But it is not difficult to know which is the best, the Christian religion, elevated and authentic, having so many advantages and privileges above the others.

Now, as they appear one after another, we find the younger builds

upon the more ancient, and next precedent, which it does not wholly disprove or condemn, but only accuses it of imperfections, and therefore comes to perfect or succeed it; so by degrees the elder is overthrown and the younger enriched with the spoils: as Judaism, which has retained much of the Egyptian religion, the Christian, founded upon the tenets and promises of the Judaic, the Turkish built upon both, retaining almost all the doctrines of Jesus Christ, but not accepting His divinity. If, therefore, a man would change from Judaism to Mohammedanism, he must pass through Christianity. Yet the elder wholly condemn the younger and regard them as enemies; although there have been Mohammedans that have suffered torture to maintain the truths of the Christian religion, as Christians

would do to maintain the truths of the Old Testament. True and false religions are maintained by human means, but the true have another jurisdiction, and are received from and held by another hand. In regard to receiving them, the first general establishing of them has been, "God working, His word confirming, and signs following." The detail is done by human means; it is the nation, country, and birth which give the particular religion; it is not of our choice or election, for a man without his knowledge is made Jew or Christian, before he knows that he is a man.

The better to know true piety, it is necessary to separate it from the false and feigned. There is nothing that makes a fairer show and takes greater pains to resemble true religion, and yet no worse enemy to it, than superstition; it is like the flatterer that counterfeits a zealous

friend, or like false coin which glitters more than the true. Religion makes a man love and honor God, giving him peace and rest lodging in a free and liberal soul. Superstition troubles a man, he never feels secure; fearing he has left something undone, he desires to appease God with vows and offerings; what is it but a punishment? He wrongs God and would flee from Him, if it were possible, and it proceeds from a malady of the soul.

Of the many different religions and manners of serving God, those seem to have the greatest appearance of truth that, without external service, draw the soul into itself and raise it by pure contemplation to adore the greatness and majesty of the First Cause of all things, the Essence of Essences, without any great declaration or definition of it, but acknowledging it without limitation to be the perfection of goodness.

And this is to approach the religion of the angels, and to accept the teaching of the Son of God "to worship in spirit and truth," for God accounts such worshippers the best.

There are others who would have a visible deity; and those that have chosen the sun for their god seem to have more reason than the others, because of its greatness, splendor, and unknown quality.

It is necessary for him who intends to be wise not to separate piety from true honesty, and content himself with one of them, nor should he confound them. Piety and probity, religion and honesty, devotion and conscience, I would have jointly in him whom I here instruct, because one cannot be perfect without the other. Here are two rocks of which we must take heed: to separate these virtues and rest contented with one—to confound them in such a way that one

rules the other. The first who separate them and have but one of these virtues are those that give themselves to the worship and service of God, taking no care at all of true virtue and honesty for which they have no taste, but putting their whole confidence in the outward observance. Through this they are the more daring in sin, thinking themselves released from all duty; they are never made better, and to them the proverb applies, "An Angel in the Church a Devil in the Home." There are others quite contrary; taking account of nothing but virtue and honesty and caring little for anything that belongs to religion, a fault of many philosophers. These are two extremes, but which is the more worthy, religion or honesty, it is not my purpose to determine. I will only say: the first is far more easy and of greater show, found in simple and ignorant minds;

the second, more difficult, and in spirits valiant and generous. He who is honest from scruple and a religious bridle, take heed of him, and he who has religion without honesty, I will not say he is more wicked, but far more dangerous than one who is without either.

I desire that there be in this my wise man true honesty and true piety, joined and wedded together, both complete, and crowned with the grace of God, which He denies to none who ask it of Him. Our instruction to piety is to learn to know God. For from the knowledge of things proceeds the honor we give them. First we must believe that He is, that He created the world by His power, goodness, and wisdom, and by these He governs it; that His providence watches over all things, even the least; and whatever He sends us is for our good, and that

whatever is evil proceeds from ourselves. If we account the fortunes evil which He sends us we blaspheme His holy name, for we naturally honor those who do us good and hate those who hurt us. We must then resolve to obey Him and to take all in good part whatever comes from His hand, and commit and submit ourselves to Him. Secondly we must honor Him, raising our spirit from all earthly imagination to the contemplation of the Divinity. God is the highest ideal of our imagination, every man amplifying the idea according to his own capacity. He is infinitely above our most exalted conception. Thirdly we must serve Him with our heart and mind, the service answering His nature, a wise man's true sacrifice to the great God; the spirit is His temple, the soul is His image, and the affections man's offerings. The most accept-

able service to Him is a pure, free, and humble heart, nevertheless we are not to condemn nor neglect the outward form, which must assist the other, by observing the ceremonies and ordinances with moderation, without ostentation or hypocrisy, and always with this thought—that God will be served in spirit, and that which is outwardly done is rather for ourselves and for human edification than for God.

Our prayer to God should be subject to His will; we should neither desire nor ask anything but as He has ordained it. It is His will that we make ourselves fit to receive from Him, for it is His office being great to give, and man being poor and needy, to ask and to receive.

REPENTANCE.

Repentance is the universal remedy for the maladies of the soul. It

is a submission and retraction of the will, a sorrow or grief engendered in us by reason, driving away all other sorrows that proceed from outward causes. True repentance is a gift of God, that touches our hearts, that must grow in us not by the weakness of the body, but by the force of the soul and of reason.

The amendment which comes from anxiety, distaste, or feebleness is not true and religious. The weakness of the body is no fit Post to carry us to God.

TO GOVERN DESIRES AND PLEASURES.

It is the duty of a wise man to know how to govern his desires and pleasures, for to condemn all pleasure is not only fanatical, but unnatural and vicious. A man must study and know this life, and meditate upon it, to the end that he may return thanks

to Him who gives it. There is nothing which God has given us in this present life unworthy our care, and for which we are not accountable. It is no frivolous commission for a man to direct himself and his life, for God has given it to him seriously and expressly. There are those, who would seem to be men of understanding, and professors of singular sanctity, who condemn all pleasures, and all care of the body, who withdraw the spirit into itself, and so pass life insensibly without thinking or taking part in it. To this kind of people, the saying, "to pass the time" is very applicable; for it seems to them that to make good use of this life is to silently pass it over, and as it were to escape it.

Contempt for all pleasures is as much a fault and an injustice as the abuse of them in loving them too much. We must neither run to them

nor fly from them, but receive and use them with discretion and moderation.

He who desires nothing, although he has nothing, is as rich as he who possesses the whole world; both come to one end.

He who is poor in desires is rich in contentment.

If we let loose the bridle of our appetite to follow abundance and luxury, we will continue in perpetual pain and labor; superfluous things will become necessary, our souls will be slaves to our bodies, and we can live only while we live in pleasure and delight.

If we do not moderate our pleasures and desires, if we do not measure them by the compass of reason, opinion will carry us to a headlong downfall, where there is neither bottom nor stay. As for example: if we make our shoes of

velvet, afterwards we will want them of cloth of gold, and lastly embroidered with pearls and diamonds; we will build our houses of marble, afterwards of jasper and porphyry. With a fool nothing suffices, nothing has certainty or contentment; he is like the moon that asked for a garment that might fit it, but was answered that that was not possible, because it was sometimes large, sometimes small, and always changeable.

CONSIDERATION OF OTHERS.

Peremptory affirmation and obstinacy in expressing opinions are ordinary signs of senselessness and ignorance. The style of the ancient Roman was, that in the witness deposing and the judge determining that which of their own knowledge they knew to be true, they expressed themselves in these words: "It seemeth." It is good to learn to use

words that sweeten and moderate the temerity of our propositions, as: It may be; I think; It is so said. It is well for a man to have his countenance and actions agreeable to all, but his thoughts hidden; to see and hear much, speak little, judge of all.

Do not fear nor be troubled with the rude incivility and bitter speeches of men; learn to harden and accustom yourself to them.

Aim always at the truth, to acknowledge it, and cheerfully yield to it.

To acknowledge a fault, to confess ignorance, to yield when there is occasion, are acts of judgment, gentleness, and sincerity, which are the principal qualities of an honest and wise man.

MAN'S OWN AFFAIRS.

When a man finds himself in any doubt or perplexity respecting a

choice of things that are not evil, he must choose that which has most honesty and justice in it, for though it may turn out otherwise than well, it will always be some comfort to have chosen the better part; and besides, he does not know if he had chosen the contrary what would have happened.

When a man is in doubt as to the best and shortest way, he must take the straightest.

Avoid that which is base and unjust; this is the rule of conscience.

Never deceive, and yet take heed not to be deceived.

Defend opinions, but do not offend. Subtle defence is as much to be commended as rude offence is to be condemned. Take all things in their proper time and season; avoid precipitation, an enemy to wisdom, the step-mother, not the true, of all good actions.

Deliberate slowly, execute speedily.

Discretion seasons and gives a relish to all things.

Indiscretion mars and takes away the grace from the best actions.

TO BE READY FOR DEATH, A FRUIT OF WISDOM.

Seneca said: "He was not born in vain that dies well; neither has he lived unprofitably, that departs happily."

He shoots not well who looks not on the mark; and he cannot live well who has not an eye to his death. The science of dying is the science of liberty, the way to fear nothing, to live well, contentedly and peaceably; there can be no pleasure in life to him who is always in fear of loss. We must endeavor to have our sins die before ourselves; and be always prepared for death.

What an excellent thing it is for a man to end his life before his death in such a way that in that hour he has nothing to do, that he has no more need of time, but sweetly and contentedly may depart this life, saying "I have finished my course."

He who would judge of the life of a man must see how he carries himself at his death, for the end crowns the work. A man may be masked in his life, but in this last part it is useless to dissemble.

"Then only, only then, and then no doubt,
Do men unmask, and now the truth comes out."

For a man to torment himself with the fear of death is a great weakness and cowardliness. What use is there of wisdom and constancy in man, to what end do they serve, if they speed him not in good actions, if he can do no more by their

help than a fool with his folly. It is misery to trouble life with the care and fear of death, and death with the care of life. It is uncertain in what place death attends us, and therefore let us attend death in all places, and be ready to receive it.

"Think every day thy last; each, ready be,
And so the uncertain hour shall welcome thee."

Many make vain excuses to cover this fear, as, for example, those who say they grieve for themselves and others that they may be cut off in the flower and strength of their years. This is the complaint of those who measure everything by the ell, forgetting that exquisite things are generally fine and delicate. It is the mark of an excellent workman to enclose much in a small space.

Great virtue and a long life seldom meet together. Life is measured by the end; provided that is

good and all the rest is in proportion, the quantity has nothing to do with making it more or less happy, any more than the greatness of a circle makes the circle more round.

"The day which thou fearest as thy last is the birthday of eternity."

To seek and desire death is an evil, it is an injustice without a cause, and it is to be out of charity with the world, to which our lives may be of benefit. To fear death, on the other side, is against nature, reason, justice, and all duty; the day of thy birth binds thee, and sets thee as well in the way of death as of life.

It is folly to grieve for that which cannot be mended, to fear that which cannot be avoided.

How excellent the example of David, after the death of his dear child, when he put on his best apparel and made merry, saying to

those who wondered, that while his son lived he importuned God for his recovery, but being dead there was no remedy.

He who fears not to die, fears nothing; he makes himself master of his own life and of others.

The disregard of death is the source of beautiful and generous actions, and from it come the free speeches of virtue uttered by so many great men. Helvidius Priscus, whom the Emperor Vespasian had commanded not to go to the Senate, but if he went, to speak as he would have him, answered that, as he was a Senator, it was right he should be in the Senate, and being there if required to give advice he should speak freely that which his conscience commanded. Being threatened by the Emperor that if he spoke he should die, he said, "Did I ever tell you that I was immortal?

Do what you will, and I will do what I ought. It is in your power to put me unjustly to death, and it is in mine to die consistently."

Our religion has no firmer principle, nor one wherein its Author has more insisted, than the contempt of this life.

A desire for the life to come makes a man thirst after death as after a great gain, as the seed of a better life, the bridge unto Paradise, the way to all good, and an earnest of the resurrection. A firm belief and hope in these things is incompatible with the fear and horror of death.

> "Have patience, man, and be content to live,
> That which a day denies, a day may give."

TRANQUILLITY OF THE SPIRIT.

Tranquillity of the spirit is the sovereign good of man. This is that great and rich treasure which the

wisest seek by sea and land. All our care should tend thereto; it is the fruit of all our labors and studies, and the crown of wisdom. It is a beautiful, equal, just, firm, and pleasant condition of the soul, which neither business, idleness, good nor ill, nor time, can in any way trouble or depress. "*Nothing troubles true tranquillity.*" The foundations a man must lay for it are true honesty, and to live in the state and vocation for which he is fitted, and added to these, true piety, with a soul pure, free, kind, contemplating God, the great Sovereign, and absolute Workmaster of all things; and from Whom he is to hope for all manner of good, and to fear no evil. Afterwards he must walk in simplicity and truth, and with a heart open to the eyes of God and the world; he must in thought, word, and action keep himself in moderation, laying aside all pomp

and vanity; rule his desires, content himself with a sufficiency. He must be constant against what may wound or hurt him, and raise himself above and beyond all fear, and so hold himself firmly without inward contention, full of joy, peace, comfort, and content in himself.

To conclude. Two things are necessary for this tranquillity of the spirit—innocence and a good conscience.

MORAL VIRTUES.

Almost all the duties of life are comprehended in the four moral virtues, Prudence, Justice, Fortitude, and Temperance. Prudence is with reason put in the first rank, as the superintendent and guide of all other virtues; it is the salt of life, the lustre and ornament of our actions.

It is the knowledge and choice of those things which we must either

desire or avoid ; it is the just estimation and trial of things ; it is the eye that sees and directs, and consists in three things—to deliberate, judge, and execute well. Though the seed of prudence, as of other virtues, is in our nature, yet it may be acquired more than any other, in some measure by precept, but principally by experience and practice. There is an ordinary prudence, which follows the laws, customs, and rules already established ; there is an individual prudence, whereby a man is wise and takes counsel of himself ; and a borrowed prudence, which follows the counsel of another. They that know neither how to give nor take counsel are fools.

"Strength void of counsel falls to ruin even of itself, one wise mind overcomes the hands of many, and many things that are hindered by nature are hastened by counsel."

JUSTICE.

The summary of all justice is contained in the commandment, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," which does not only set down the duty of man towards others, but shows the duty and love he owes himself. Before a man can well command others, he must learn to command himself, yielding to reason, the authority.

Resolve not to live carelessly, after an uncertain fashion, as so many do, only living from day to day, and not taking life earnestly or seriously. They taste not, they possess not, they enjoy not their life; they live, as it were, insensibly, and to them life is only a term.

Not to enjoy life is treason against a man's self. A man must order his life as if it were a bargain made whereof he must give an exact account. The greatest wisdom is

for a man to learn to live alone, and at his ease, neither seeking nor disdaining the company of other men, but having that within himself wherewith to find entertainment, which comes not from vanity, but from profound study and delightful culture. To many, life is a procrastination; they employ it in vain speculations. They deliberate, hesitating like those who put off buying and selling until the market is closed, and when they see their folly they complain. While they are in doubt, life passes away. Zenon said "we have not need of anything so much as time." For life is short, and art is long; not the art to heal, but rather to live, which is wisdom.

Let not the present moment escape you unemployed, for of the next who can assure you?

He who sows does not know who

may reap, but he who reaps need not care who were the sowers.

LOVE AND FRIENDSHIP.

Friendship is the life of the world. Without it there is no joy, and all things seem dark. "Friendship is the companion of justice, the bond of nature, . . . the comfort of old age, and the quiet harbor of man's life."

If friendship were everywhere in force, there would be no need of law, which is a remedy for the want of it, enforcing and constraining by authority that which for love and friendship should be free and voluntary.

Friendship rules the heart, the tongue, the hand, and the will.

There is great diversity in friendships from the causes which engender them, and these are four in number—Nature, Virtue, Profit, and Pleasure,

which sometimes go together and sometimes separately.

Of these foundations for friendship virtue is the strongest and noblest, for it is spiritual and in the heart as friendship is; while nature is in the blood, profit in the purse, pleasure in the senses. He who loves for virtue is never weary of loving, and if friendship is broken complains not. He who loves for profit, if friendship fails, murmurs, and it ends in reproach. He who loves for pleasure, when that ceases his love dies with it, and without complaint he estranges himself.

Another distinction in friendship, regards its strength and intention, from which arise the common and the perfect. The common is attained and grows by various profitable and delightful occasions and incidents, and there are two ways to obtain it: to speak pleasantly, and to do profit-

able things. The perfect is acquired only by a true lively virtue, reciprocally known. The common may be between many, the perfect only between two.

There is nothing more free and voluntary than affection, built upon the choice and liberty of the will. The souls of men in this perfect friendship cannot be divided ; neither would they be. There is no speech between them of indebtedness, thankfulness, and other light duties, which are nourishers of common friendship, and yet testimonies of division. Should I thank myself for the service I render myself? He is the giver that gives cause to his friend to express and employ his love ; and he is the receiver that by giving binds his friend : for both seeking above all things to do good one to the other, he that gives the occasion and yields the matter is he

that is liberal, giving the contentment to his friend to do what he most desires.

Of this perfect friendship and communion, antiquity gives us some examples. Blosius, taken for a great friend of Tiberius Gracchus, then condemned to die, being asked what he would do for his friend's sake, answered he would refuse nothing. It was then demanded what he would do if Gracchus should entreat him to fire the temples, to which he replied that Gracchus would never ask such a thing at his hands, but, if he did, he would obey him—a bold and dangerous answer.

Having said that Gracchus would never require it, that should have been his answer, for according to our description a perfect friend does not only know the will of his friend, but holds it in his sleeve, and wholly possesses it.

Free and hearty admonition is a very wholesome and excellent medicine, and the best office of friendship; for to wound and offend a little, to profit much, is to love soundly. This is one of the principal and most profitable evangelical commandments: "If thy brother sin against thee, reprove him." All have some need of this remedy, but especially those in prosperity. To undertake this, four things are required: judgment, discretion, courageous liberty, and loyal friendship; these are tempered and mingled together, but for fear of offending, or for want of true friendship, few are willing to do it, and of those who are, how few know how to do it well.

If it is not done well it is like medicine badly administered, it hurts without profit. Truth, however noble it is, has not the privilege of being used at all hours and in all places.

Observe the time and place, not choosing an occasion of feasting or great joy, for that were to "trouble the feast"; nor one of sorrow and adversity, that is the time to comfort. "Chiding is cruel in adversity; to chide is to condemn when help is needful." Admonish secretly and without witnesses, that one may not be overcome with shame, especially before those whose good opinion one may desire to retain.

FIDELITY.

All men, even the most treacherous, know and confess that fidelity is the bond of human society, the foundation of all justice, and above all things to be religiously observed.

Nevertheless the world is full of treachery; there are but few who are truly loyal and keep their faith; they break it in various ways, perhaps without perceiving it. They

find some pretext for what they do; seek corners, evasions, and subtilties.

Confidence is a sacred thing, and must simply be received; when hostages are demanded or sureties given, it is no more faith nor trust. Do not think to give assurance of fidelity by new and strange oaths and the use of God's name, as many do. This is superfluous among honest men, and the breach includes perjury, which is worse than treachery.

Treachery and perjury are in a certain sense more base and execrable than atheism. The atheist who believes there is no God is not as hurtful in thinking there is no God as he who believes in Him and in mockery and contempt abuses His name. Treachery is the capital enemy of human society, for it breaks and destroys the bands thereof, and of all commerce that depends upon the word and promises of men,

for these failing us we have nothing else to rely upon.

FLATTERY.

Flattery is a very dangerous poison, and if a man is once corrupted by flattery, it necessarily follows that all who are about him, if they would live in peace and favor, must be flatterers. It is as pernicious as truth is excellent, for it is the corruption of truth. It is also the despicable vice of a base, beggarly mind, as ill becoming a man as imprudence a woman.

Flattery is hard to be avoided—it is sweet even to the wisest, so that though a man withstands it, it pleases, and though he opposes it, he never quite shuts it out-of-doors; and it is no easy matter to distinguish it, so well is it counterfeited and covered with the visage of friendship.

A flatterer will seem to exceed in love him whom he flatters, whereas there is nothing more opposite to love,—not detraction, injury, nor professed enmity. It is the plague and poison of true friendship. Better are the sharp admonitions of a friend than the kisses of a flatterer.

Flattery regards for the most part its own particular benefit; true friendship seeks not the good of self.

A flatterer is changeable, like a chameleon, and he will accommodate himself to the minds of those he flatters. A friend is firm and constant, and cares not so much how he may please as how he may benefit.

LYING.

Near neighbor to flattery is lying, a base vice. The first step in the corruption of good manners is the banishment of truth. Silence is more friendly than untrue speech.

If a lie had but one visage, as truth has, there would be some remedy for it, for then we could take the exact contrary of that which the liar speaks to be the certain truth.

But the contrary to truth has a thousand forms, and an unlimited field. There is but one way to hit the mark, but there are a thousand ways to miss it. Doubtless if men realized the horror of lying they would pursue it with fire and sword; for like opinionative obstinacy it never leaves off growing. It behooves a liar to have a good memory.

A man must not tell all he knows, that is folly; but that which he speaks, let it be what he believes.

"Report is never brought to full trial."

BENEFITS.

It is in the thankful acknowledgment of obligations and benefits that

we fail most. We neither know how to do good, nor to be thankful.

It is the work of an honest and generous man to do good and to deserve well of another, and also to seek the opportunity to do so.

"It is the part of a liberal man even to seek occasions for giving." (Ambrose.)

God, nature, and reason invite us, and in nothing can we come nearer to the nature of God than in doing good. Neither do we know any better means to imitate Him, whose example and nature are wholly good.

He who gives, honors himself, and makes himself master over the receiver. He who takes, sells himself. Many have refused to receive benefits lest they should lose their liberty, especially from those whom they could not love.

Cæsar was wont to say: "There

comes no sound more pleasing to my ears than prayers and petitions."

It is the word of the Almighty: "Ask me; call upon me in the day of tribulation, and I will deliver thee."

It is a most noble and honorable use of our means to employ them for the good and comfort of others. As long as we hold them privately they bear the ignoble names — houses, lands, money; but brought into light for the good of others they are ennobled with new and glorious titles, as Beneficence, Liberality, Magnanimity; it is the best use that can be made of them, whereby the principal is assured and the profit very great.

How shall a man bestow his bounty, and to whom shall he give? It seems that to do good to the wicked and unworthy is a fault, for it brings an ill name to the giver, kindles malice, and gives to vice also, that

which belongs to virtue and merit. Doubtless, free and gracious gifts are due only to the good and worthy, but in a time of necessity or of common benefit it is better to do good to those who are unworthy, for the sake of the good, than to deprive the good on account of the evil. God lets the sun to shine, and the rain to fall, alike upon all. "There is a great difference between not excluding and choosing."

Give willingly and cheerfully, not suffering one's self to be entreated and importuned. "God loveth a cheerful giver."

Benefits are esteemed according to the will with which they are bestowed. That which is yielded by entreaty is sold dearly,

Give speedily. "He gives twice who gives quickly."

An indifferent and careless regard when help is given is not kind; a

readiness in giving doubles the benefit.

Diligence must be used in all points; to refuse to do a good deed, and that slowly, is a double injury.

'He is less deceived who is soon denied."

The best way to give is to anticipate, and prevent the necessity for asking.

He who entreats humbles himself.

Give without hope of restitution; in this lies the force and virtue of a benefit, for while a man seeks after payment, he is deprived of that inward joy and comfort, which he receives in doing good.

A gift has its true lustre and glory when there is no chance for requital, even ignorance from whence it came.

He deserves nothing who does good that he may receive something in return. It is said a benefactor must forget his good deeds. He

must continue them and by new ones confirm the old; never repenting, however it may seem that the seed has been cast upon barren and unfruitful ground. "Let even the ill success of thy good deeds please thee."

An unthankful man wrongs none but himself, and a good deed is not lost by ingratitude.

"The best men, and generous minds will bear with an ungrateful person, until with their goodness they shall make him grateful; persevering goodness overcometh the evil."

How base a vice is ingratitude; it is odious to all men. "Thou speakest of all evil that can be said when thou namest an ungrateful man." In revenge there is some show of justice, and man does not hide himself to work his will, but in ingratitude there is nothing but base dishonesty and shame.

Thankfulness or acknowledgment must have these conditions:

First: The benefit should be graciously received. "He who receives the benefit thankfully discharges the first payment." (Seneca.)

Secondly: It should never be forgotten. "He who forgets a benefit is of all others the most ungrateful, for in no respect can he be made thankful who forgets a service." (Pliny.)

Thirdly: It should be spoken of.

As a man has found the heart and hand of another open to do him good, so must he have his mouth open to publish it.

And fourthly: Restitution should be made. But beware of too great an unwillingness to be in debt, or too much haste to cancel the obligation. It gives occasion to the friend or benefactor to think his courtesy was not kindly accepted; for to be

too careful to pay incurs the suspicion of ingratitude; yet be not too long, lest the benefit grows old; the Graces are painted young. Choose a proper occasion without noise or display. And lastly, if a man's inability be such that he cannot make present restitution, let his will be strong enough to acknowledge the benefit.

DUTY.

The duty of the great consists in two things: in endeavoring to use their lives and ability for the defence and conservation of piety, justice, and generally for the welfare and good of the commonwealth, of which they ought to be the pillars and supporters; and after this in defending and protecting the poor and oppressed, and in resisting the violence of the wicked. In this manner Moses became the head of the Jewish nation,

undertaking the defence of men injured and unjustly oppressed. Those that have done likewise have been called heroes, and for such, the defenders of their people, the deliverers of the oppressed, all honors have been established from ancient times.

It is not greatness for men to make themselves feared, except by their enemies, or to terrify, which sometimes produces hate. It is better to be beloved.

The duty of inferiors towards their superiors consists in honoring and reverencing those whom they serve, not only outwardly but with love and affection if it is deserved, and in pleasing by faithfully performing their duties, proving themselves worthy of protection.

VALOR.

Valor is a right and strong determination, a uniform steadiness of mind

against all dangerous, difficult, and melancholy accidents; in short, difficulty and danger bring it into play, and all that human weakness fears.

Of all the virtues it is held in the highest estimation. It contains magnanimity, patience, constancy, invincible resolution, heroic qualities; it is an impregnable bulwark, a complete armor.

"An invincible fortress of human weakness, that whosoever arms himself with it, continues secure in this siege of life." (Seneca.)

Valor presupposes knowledge of the danger and difficulty of an enterprise, as well as of its beauty, justice, and obligation, and they are deceived who think it an inconsiderate temerity or senseless stupidity.

Virtue cannot be without knowledge and apprehension; a man cannot truly condemn the danger which he does not know.

Valor is not a quality of the body but of the mind. A settled strength not of the arms and legs, but of the courage. The valor of a man is in his heart and will, and he whose courage fails not for any fear of death, though he fall he is not vanquished, but by fortune.

They who attribute valor to subtlety and craft, or to art and industry, profane it. The Lacedæmonians permitted no fencers or master-wrestlers in their cities, that their youth might be trained by nature, not by art. We account it a bold and hardy thing to fight a lion, a bear, or a wild boar, which encounter a man only according to nature; but not so to fight with wasps, for they use subtlety. Alexander would not contend in the Olympic games, saying there was no equality, because a private might overcome and a king be vanquished. Moreover, it is not

fitting for a man of honor to venture his valor where a base fellow instructed by rules might gain the prize; for such victory comes not from virtue, or courage, but from certain artificial tricks and inventions, in which the base will do that which a valiant man knows not, neither desires to.

FORTITUDE.

The virtue fortitude is exercised and employed against all that the world accounts evil, as adversity, affliction, injury, unhappiness, and accidents. Fortitude arms a man against them and temperance guides him.

Evils are general or particular concerning the mass or only ourselves.

In common evils or misfortunes one should consider from whence they come and note the cause.

A man must not murmur against

the will of God ; it is impiety, and he torments himself to no purpose.

There is no better remedy for the ills of destiny than to apply our wills to His will, and according to the advice of wisdom make a virtue of necessity.

The advice we would give against personal evils, or wrongs that may be done to one by others, is to be firm and resolute ; not suffering one's self to be led by common opinion, but without passion to consider of what weight and importance things are according to truth and reason.

How many make less account of a great wound than of a little blow? To be brief, all is measured by opinion.

The world suffers itself to be persuaded and led by impressions, and an opinion may offend more than a wrong done, and our impatience hurt us more than those of whom we complain.

We must take heed to do nothing unworthy and unbefitting ourselves that may give another an advantage over us; an unwise man who distrusts himself and goes into a passion without cause encourages another to oppose him. It is a weakness of the mind not to overlook an offence.

A stronghold against all such accidents is that we can receive no evil but from ourselves, and if our judgment is as it should be we are invulnerable.

Respecting those who offend us, if we hold them vain and unwise, we should treat them accordingly, and so leave them; if otherwise, we should excuse them, and think they may have had occasion for what they have done, and that it is not from malice, but misunderstanding or negligence.

Moreover, let us make use of the injury done us; first profiting by the

offenders, who gave us occasion to know those who would wrong us, that we may avoid them in the future; and secondly, by seeing our weakness and how we may be ourselves defeated, and a way to amend our faults. What better revenge can a man take than to profit by injuries received from an enemy, and thereby better and more securely to manage his affairs?

PUBLIC REPROACH.

This affliction is of various kinds. If it is loss of honors and dignities it is rather a gain than a loss. Dignities are but honorable servitude, where a man by giving himself to the public is deprived of himself. Honors are but the torches of envy and jealousy, and in the end exile and poverty. If a man recalls the history of the past he will find that many who have carried themselves

worthily and virtuously have ended their lives in exile or some violent death; so much so that such a fate would seem the livery of the most honest men, for it is the ordinary recompense for public service. A generous spirit should despise such public disfavor, for he dishonors himself and shows how little he has profited in the study of wisdom, if he regards the reports or speeches of the people be they good or evil.

REVENGE.

Against the cruel passion revenge, we must remember there is nothing so honorable as to know how to pardon. Every man may prosecute the law to right the wrong he has received, but to be gracious and forgive belongs to a prince. If thou wilt be a king of kings and do an act that becomes a sovereign, be generous towards him who has offended.

There is no reason that a man should be a judge and plaintiff too, as he that revenges himself is; he must commit the matter to a third person, or at least take counsel of the wise. Jupiter might alone dart out his favorite lightnings, but when there was a question of sending forth his avenging thunderbolts he could not do it without the counsel and assistance of the twelve gods. Was it not strange that the greatest of the gods, who of himself had power to do good to the whole world, could not hurt one person, until after solemn deliberation? The wisdom of Jupiter himself fears to err, where there is a question of revenge, and therefore he has need of counsel.

Let us arm ourselves with patience, and be persuaded that we cannot be offended but with ourselves, that from the wrongs of

another nothing remains in us but that which we retain.

Forgiveness wins for us affection.

Many things wise men do as men, but not as wise men.

Beauty is as wisdom, and wisdom is a spiritual beauty.

Nobility is a desire for virtue, and learning the riches of the spirit.

"Like apples of gold in pictures of silver, so are words spoken in due season." (Proverb.)

A wise man is a skilful artificer who profits by all; whatever falls into his hands he makes a fit subject for good, and with the same countenance he beholds the two faces of fortune.

Wisdom is a mild and regular managing of the soul, and he is wise who governs himself in his desires, thoughts, opinions, speech, and actions by the rule of judgment.

A wise man rules himself according to nature and reason, regards his duty, and suspects whatever depends upon opinion and passion; and so he lives in peace, passing away his life cheerfully, and not subject to repentance, recantations, or changes, because whatever may happen he could not have chosen better, and in this way he is neither provoked nor troubled, for reason is always tranquil.

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